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WINE & DINE

B6

Walking the Tightrope



STEVE
MacNAULL
Fill'er Up



Husband-and-wife team Graham and Lyndsay O'Rourke own and operate Tightrope Winery on the Naramata Bench.

Special to The Okanagan Weekend

The high-wire imagery, symbolism and metaphors abound at **Tightrope Winery** on the Naramata Bench.

Husband-and-wife owners, **Graham**, the viticulturist, and, **Lyndsay**, the winemaker, **O'Rourke**, refer to the enthusiasm and life-long dedication they have to wine as a tightrope worth walking.

As such, Tightrope wines are a balance of what's produced in the vineyard by Graham and what's crafted in the cellar by Lyndsay.

The visual is on all labels is a stylized person traversing a tightrope clutching a balancing pole.

Fascinating fact: a tightrope walker can also be called a funambulist.

Four of the winery's new releases also embrace the tightrope axiom.

The **2016 Equipoise** (\$45) literally means balance or state of equilibrium.

The red blend hits is 40 per cent each of Merlot and Syrah and 20 per cent Cabernet Franc.

Expect lots of dark fruit such as cherry, plum and blackberry, along with vanilla, tobacco and spice, velvety tannins and a long finish.

The standalone **2016 Cabernet Franc** (\$28) is made with grapes from Lyndsay's sister's **Eira Thomas'** Naramata vineyard.

The red offers aromas and flavours of cassis, cherry, plum, blackberry, vanilla, tobacco and leather, all in a pleasing, medium-bodied package.

Tip-Toe 2017 (\$22) is Tightrope's signature white and an impeccable balance of Gewurztraminer (44 per cent), Riesling (30 per cent) and Chardonnay (26 per cent).

It's a refreshing fruit cup of aromas and flavours ranging from mandarin orange, pink grapefruit, pear, pineapple and mango stabilized with rose petal and spice.

The **2017 rose** (\$25) is also a study in steadfastness.

Pinot Noir, along with a few Barbera, grapes were soaked on the skins in the cold for just a day to produce a pink reminiscent of raspberry, strawberry, rhubarb, grapefruit, cranberry, violet and light spice.

Graham and Lyndsay met in Whistler, but decided to settle in the Okanagan after both earning oenology and viticulture honours degrees at Lincoln University in New Zealand.

After replanting an apple orchard in Naramata to grapes in 2007, Graham went off to West Kelowna's **Mission Hill Winery** to work in the vineyard and Lyndsay made wines for nearby **Ruby Blues**.

In 2012, with their own vineyard mature, the couple decided to dedicate themselves full-time to Tightrope and start crafting wines under their own label.

Sunny's open

Cluck and grunt.

Chicks on a raft.

Bow wow.

Aye aye captain.

Chuck and cheese.

And two cows make 'em cry.

There's a whole world of fascinating lingo associated with the traditional roadside diner and low-brow greasy spoon.

Sunny's, a modern diner in downtown Kelowna, has retained some of the fun lingo, but toyed with the recipes.

"I've always wanted to have a breakfast and lunch place with elevated diner food," said co-owner and chef **Rod Butters**.

"We've got it here with this funky little space (850 square feet, 30 seats inside and 14 on the patio) with exposed brick and ceiling, clean retro tile, neon sign and stainless steel counter."

Sunny's, which opened this week, is named after Butters' 14-year-old golden retriever, who was at the grand opening.

The pooch's photo also graces the diner's walls, menus and front window.

Sunny's is part of Butters' **Raudz Creative Concept** chain, which he owns with partner **Audrey Surrao**, and includes **Raudz Regional Table** and **Micro Bar+Bites**, also both in downtown Kelowna, and **Terrafina** restaurant at **Hester Creek Winery** in Oliver.

Speaking of Hester Creek, wines from the property are the only ones on the menu at Sunny's.

In keeping with the unpretentious and casual atmosphere, the wines are listed as fermented red and white grape juice.

Both the **Cabernet Sauvignon-Merlot** and **Pinot Gris** are \$7 a glass.

By the way, cluck and grunt is two eggs any style with your choice of pork – one of four types of bacon or sausage patty.

Chicks on a raft are scrambled eggs, bacon, cheese and peanut butter on a toasted baguette.

Bow wow is a lamb sausage stuffed in a bun with French fries and cole slaw.

Aye aye captain is beer-battered fish and calamari with chips.

Chuck and cheese is ground-beef cheeseburger.

And two cows make 'em cry is two beef patties



Tightrope 2017 Tip Toe (\$22) Tightrope 2016 Equipoise (\$45) Tightrope 2017 rose (\$25) Tightrope 2016 Cab Franc (\$28)



STEVE MacNAULL/The Okanagan Weekend

Sunny, the 14-year-old golden retriever, is the namesake for Sunny's: A Modern Diner in downtown Kelowna. The dog is pictured here with chef Robyn Sigurdson, chef and co-owner Rod Butters, co-owner Audrey Surrao and director of operations Bernard Casavant.

on a bun with loads of toppings.

Of course, there's myriad other breakfast options from chicken and waffles, pancakes and bagels to breakfast poutine, pastries and French toast.

For lunch, choose from soups, salads, other burgers and sandwiches.

There's milkshakes, including adult ones made with **Baileys**, **Grand Marnier** or **Kahlua**, juices and sodas, beers, ciders and cocktails on the drinks list.

For now, Sunny's is open daily 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

In the summer, it will also be open late afternoons and for dinner with the breakfast menu all day and the lunch menu from 11 a.m. onward.

Lieutenant Governor

The **Lieutenant-Governor's Awards for Excellence** and the **B.C. Wine Awards** have been combined to create the **British Columbia Lieutenant Governor's Wine Awards**.

Previously, the Lieutenant Governor's awards recognized just 12 wines annually as the best in the province.

The winning wineries received extra recognition when the Lieutenant Governor visited with foreign consul representatives with an eye to promoting the wines within B.C. and internationally.

The wines would also be stocked at Government

House in Victoria to be served to visiting dignitaries at dinners, receptions and special events hosted by the Lieutenant Governor.

The B.C. Wine Awards were part of the Fall Okanagan Wine Festival and recognized numerous wines with bronze, silver and gold medals and a single wine named B.C. wine of the year.

The newly merged awards will also bestow bronze, silver and gold metals, along with platinum medals for the top one per cent and a single **Lieutenant-Governor's Award** for the best wine in the province.

The re-imagined awards will be judged in July and announced to kick off the fall fest on Sept. 27 at the Lieutenant Governor's Wine Awards reception at the Laurel Packing House in Kelowna.

The new awards will continue to be personally supported by the Lieutenant Governor and she will present the awards at the reception.

The Lieutenant Governor is the Queen's representative in the province.

B.C. is getting a new Lieutenant Governor with **Metro Vancouver YMCA CEO Janet Austin** taking over from **Judith Guichon** sometime later this month.

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