



## FIVE INDUSTRY LEADERS HONOURED AT THE 2021 CANADIAN WINE INDUSTRY AWARDS CEREMONY

For Immediate Release

Ottawa, ON (July 21, 2021). Wine Growers Canada (WGC) and Wine Growers British Columbia (WGBC) are proud to announce the recipients of the 2021 Canadian Wine Industry Awards, sponsored by national accounting, tax and business consulting firm MNP, and 2021 Wine Growers British Columbia Industry Recognition Awards, which were all presented during a virtual ceremony today.

This year's distinguished recipients are:

Canadian Wine Industry Award of Distinction - Steve Bolliger  
Canadian Wine Industry Champion Award - Debbie Trenholm  
The Karl Kaiser Canadian Winemaker Award – Howard Soon  
Wine Growers British Columbia Industry Recognition Award – Kurtis Kolt  
Wine Growers British Columbia Award of Distinction – Glenn Fawcett

### **2021 Canadian Wine Industry Awards**

The Canadian Wine Industry Awards are presented annually by WGC and recognize individuals, organizations and businesses that have gone above and beyond to support and enhance the wine industry in Canada, celebrating the success, leadership and outstanding commitment in Canada's grape wine industry.

"Today's Canadian Wine Industry Awards have showcased our diverse industry, and everyone at Wine Growers Canada are honoured to recognize the outstanding contribution, dedication and expertise that all of our nominees and winners have provided. Recognizing and celebrating these accomplishments is very important, as these industry successes celebrate our world class wine industry," said WGC President and CEO, Dan Paszkowski.

The winner of the **Canadian Wine Industry Award of Distinction** - regarded as the highest form of peer recognition in the Canadian wine industry – is Steve Bolliger. Steve dedicated decades of his working life to supporting the creation of major national wine brands which supported consistent and sustainable growth for great wines in Canada.

“For almost three decades, Steve Bolliger has exemplified a strong commitment and leadership towards the pursuit of Canadian wine excellence,” remarked Paszkowski. “This award is a testament to Steve’s strategic vision as an innovative executive which has built some of Canada’s most admired wine brands with a dedication to growing the Canadian wine industry into a region whose exceptional quality wines can stand alongside the best in the world.”

The **Wine Industry Champion Award**, is presented to an individual who has provided exemplary support to the Canadian wine industry through media, policy or advocacy, was awarded to Debbie Trenholm, President of Savvy Company. Starting in 2016, Debbie has brought together Canadian wineries from coast-to-coast, benefiting Canadian wine businesses with her business platform and entrepreneurial drive.

“WGC is proud to honour Debbie for her exceptional and ongoing promotion of wines from all regions of the country,” stated Paszkowski. “Through hard work and leadership, Debbie’s dedication to Canadian wines of origin has supported the education of thousands of Canadians to become passionate advocates for the Canadian wine industry.”

The **Karl Kaiser Canadian Winemaker Award** was created in 2018 to celebrate great Canadian winemakers, in honour of the legacy of the late Karl Kaiser, a Canadian wine industry pioneer and viticultural visionary. The recipient of this year’s award is British Columbia winemaker, Howard Soon.

“With more than 40 vintages, and an impressive list of awards, Howard is a pioneer of producing great Canadian wines, whose service to winemaking, innovation and compassion has helped place Canada on the world map of great wines,” said Paszkowski.

### **2021 British Columbia Industry Recognition Awards**

Presented by Wine Growers British Columbia (WGBC), the WGBC Industry Recognition Awards are presented annually in recognition of outstanding achievements and contributions to the BC wine industry.

“It’s always important to recognize individuals and organizations who go above and beyond to promote and support our industry, but even more so following a challenging year like 2020,” commented WGBC President & CEO Miles Prodan. “Today, on behalf of the WGBC Board and staff, we are excited to recognize and celebrate our industry peers and commend them on their passion, determination and perseverance.”

The **Wine Growers British Columbia Industry Recognition Award** was established in 2013 to honour a non-winery individual, business or organization for support of the BC wine industry and BC VQA Wine through media, research, policy, regulation, education or advocacy. Past recipients include Tim Pawsey (wine writer), Jeffrey Thomas (BC Wine Authority), MLA and former Parliamentary Secretary of Liquor John Yap, John Schreiner (wine writer), and former MP Ron

Cannan. We are delighted to announce that the winner of the 2021 WGBC Industry Recognition Award is Vancouver-based sommelier, educator, and wine consultant Kurtis Kolt.

“With bylines including *Decanter*, *SIP Northwest*, *Maclean’s* and *Vancouver Magazine*, Kurtis has shared the stories behind the BC wine industry with readers from around the world,” said Prodan. “His passion for the industry is contagious and we are truly fortunate to have such an amazing ambassador for the Wines of British Columbia.”

“Throughout my career, it has been such a privilege to support, promote and educate people on the high quality, diversity, and value that BC VQA wines represent, the land they come from, and the community that has built our industry into what it is today,” remarked Kolt. “I am so grateful to be receiving this award, and look forward to many more years as an ambassador for the BC wine industry, and enthusiastic consumer of these wines.”

Established in 2016, the **Wine Growers British Columbia Award of Distinction** recognizes a winery or grower representative for outstanding leadership, commitment, and passion for the advancement of the British Columbia wine industry. Past winners including Howard Soon (Andrew Peller Ltd.), Harry McWatters (Encore Vineyards), Tony Stewart (Quails’ Gate Winery), Vera Klokočka (Hillside Winery), and Robert Smith (Hester Creek Estate Winery) We are proud to announce that this year’s recipient is Glenn Fawcett, Chief Wine Evangelist at Black Hills Estate Winery.

“During his 19-year career, Glenn has brought new energy to the BC wine industry in numerous capacities,” noted Prodan. “Initially as an Okanagan Wine Tour Operator, then as an Event promoter, then as a marketer of Therapy Vineyards, then as President & CEO of Black Hills Estate Winery and now their Chief Wine Evangelist - all with his signature flare.”

“Thank you to Miles and the team at Wine Growers BC for this,” remarked Fawcett. “I am just thrilled, and humbled to be selected by my peers. With more than 350 licensed wineries in the province and over 12,000 people employed in the wine industry,” he continues, “this is an unbelievable honour. And I note that this accolade would not be possible if I did not have the support of many people along the way.”

Congratulations to this year’s worthy recipients and thank you for your extraordinary contributions to the Canadian wine industry.

To learn more about the Canadian Wine Industry Awards, visit [WineGrowersCanada.ca](https://www.winegrowerscanada.ca) and for more details about the Wine Growers British Columbia Industry Recognition Awards, visit [WineBC.com](https://www.winebc.com).

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Suggested Tweet: Wine industry leaders Debbie Trenholm, Steve Bolliger, Howard Soon, Kurtis Kolt and Glenn Fawcett honoured at the 2021 Canadian Wine Industry Awards on July 21.  
<https://bit.ly/3xVPhvp> #bcwine #cdnwine

[Images Available.](#)

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## **ABOUT WINE GROWERS BRITISH COLUMBIA**

Since 1990, WGBC has played a pivotal role in taking B.C.'s wine industry from a vision to an internationally recognized niche region producing premium wines and providing exceptional wine tourism experiences.

WGBC markets the wine and regions of B.C.; delivers quality trade, media and consumer tastings; and acts as the voice of B.C.'s wine industry by advocating to government on behalf of industry that contributes \$2.8 billion in provincial economic growth annually.

WGBC represents all wineries in British Columbia to grow the premium market share for the Wines of British Columbia, while driving awareness of our world-class wines and tourism product - currently drawing 1,000,000 visitors with \$600 million in tourism and tourism employment related economic impact every year. For more information about Wine Growers British Columbia's member programs and services, please visit [WineBC.com](http://WineBC.com).

## **ABOUT WINE GROWERS CANADA**

Wine Growers Canada (WGC) is the national voice of the Canadian wine industry, representing more than 90% of annual wine production. CVA members are engaged in the entire wine value chain from grape growing, farm management, grape harvesting, research, wine production, bottling, retail sales and tourism. For more information about Wine Growers Canada, visit [WineGrowersCanada.ca](http://WineGrowersCanada.ca).

## **ABOUT MNP**

MNP is a leading national accounting, tax and business consulting firm in Canada. Through partner-led engagements, MNP provides a collaborative, cost-effective approach to doing business and personalized strategies to help organizations succeed in Canada and internationally, and has an extensive history of working with food and beverage processors. For more information about MNP, visit [MNP.ca](http://MNP.ca).