

## Official opening at Harper's Trail

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Ed and Vicki Collett are curious about who their new neighbours will be.

The owners of Harper's Trail winery on Shuswap Road know a large hunk of land just west of them recently sold — and they also know it's prime for more vineyards.

They know this because their own 18-acre vineyard, the end result of a dream launched in a small bed-and-breakfast in Naramata a few years ago, now produces award-winning wines.

The Colletts officially opened their winery on Saturday, Aug. 10, toasting it with their 2012 rosé.

There was never any doubt they would go anywhere but back home to Kamloops to follow their dream.

Ed said he and his wife were inspired by the many wineries they encountered during their travels around the world — in particular those they visited in Chile.

As he spoke to people at the public open house, Ed's voice caught a few times as he talked about buying part of the former Harper Ranch — the same place Thaddeus Harper once ran cattle and within eyesight of the old hops farm along the South Thompson River — and planting those first clippings.

Last year, the winery bottled about 3,300 litres of wine, which translated into about 4,400 bottles, he said, and the vineyard will expand next year when gamay noir and pinot noir are planted.

He was emotional, he said later, not only because the dream is growing, but because the couple overcame several hurdles along the way — not the least of which being a dispute with the Tk'emlups Indian Band about permits.

Work had to stop while the issue was addressed.

There are plans beyond the new grapes. The Colletts have already picked out an area where they want to build an underground barrel room, a place that will be ideal for samplings and which will eventually be attached to a restaurant.

The structure now being used for sales, samplings and storage will be replaced with a larger building in coming months, to be joined with a deli sometime next year, said operations manager Bobbe Lyall.

Local entertainers will also be promoted; Margit Bull and Sweetgrass are the featured act at a barbecue at the winery on Sept. 21, for example.

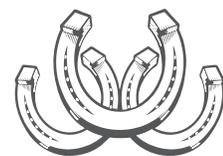
The winery has also hooked up with local fitness guru Jo Berry, who is organizing a run at the site later this year.

Charity is also set to benefit.

The winery is charging \$5 for a sample — a substantial pouring, Lyall said — and half the proceeds will be going to local non-profit agencies.

For now, the winery is open daily from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. for sales and samplings and tours can be arranged.

It is slated to shut down for winter at Thanksgiving, re-opening on the Victoria Day weekend in 2014.



# HARPER'S TRAIL