

## **Frank's Grapes of Rapture**

By Deborah Alexander, Staff writer

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For Dr. Konstantin Frank Vinifera Wine Cellars, 2007 is turning out to be a very good year.

The Hammondsport winery, located on the western shores of Keuka Lake, has been honored with more than 30 gold medals from national and international wine competitions.



At the Dr. Konstantin Frank Vinifera Wine Cellars, Al Graves of Irondequoit, left, took Christina Alvarsson and Rickard Jorgensen of Norrkoping, Sweden, on a wine-tasting tour with their son, Axel, who had been Graves' exchange student.

Recent honors include the platinum award for the "best of class" at the Los Angeles International Wine Competition, and a double gold and five gold medals at the Great Lakes Wine Competition in Farmington Hills, Mich.

Next month, the winery celebrates its 45th anniversary, which will be marked with the opening of a new 2,500-square-foot wine tasting pavilion on Aug. 26.

The awards and the recognition are all part of the "missionary work" to educate people about the quality of New York wines, according to Fred Frank, president of the winery.

"The reputation of New York wines is still dated, with many people thinking that Finger Lakes wineries produce only Concord. Many people still don't understand the renaissance of the last 50 years," said Frank, 50.

That renaissance was started by his grandfather, Dr. Konstantin Frank, who founded the family winery in 1962. Konstantin Frank's experiments with European varietals led to development of root stock resistant to the cold, which enabled him to successfully introduce vinifera grapes to the Finger

Lakes region. His success laid the foundation for the Riesling the area produces today.

At the winery, Riesling is No. 1 in terms of acreage (50), production and notoriety. Depending on the severity of the winter, the winery produces 30,000 to 50,000 cases of wine per year.



The wines from Frank's grapes have won 30 awards in national and international wine competitions this year.

"This, along with other out-of-state successes, brings new visitors to the area."

One bonus from the recent honor in the Los Angeles wine competition was more exposure.

All 20 of the "best of class" platinum winners will have their wines sold at 50 Ralphs supermarkets throughout California. Frank said the grocery chain agreed to buy 200 cases of the award-winning 2006 Dry Riesling, which should be on store shelves within the next few months.

"This is the first time a premium Finger Lakes wine is available to a large group of consumers in California," he said.