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BC Reds take on France and Win Top Spots at Canada-Bordeaux Challenge

*CedarCreek takes first place overall at head-to-head competition. BC's Bordeaux-style red blends are continuing their march to the top of the red wine world.

A tasting today at the **Vendange Institute** pitted six of BC's red blends against six from the Bordeaux region of France and six from Ontario. BC wines took three of the top four and five of the top ten spots, with Kelowna CedarCreek's Platinum Reserve Meritage 2002 coming out on top.

The five other BC wines finished as follows: Burrowing Owl 2002 Reserve Meritage was third, Sumac Ridge 2001 Pinnacle fourth, Osoyoos Larose 2002 ninth, Mission Hill Oculus 2002 tenth, and Fairview Cellars Bear's Meritage 2002 seventeenth.

Today's tasting, called Canada vs. Bordeaux: The Dawn of a New Millennium, was a fundraiser organized by the **Vendange Institute** in Ottawa. The event was modeled after the famed 1976 Judgment of Paris, when an English wine merchant in Paris organized a blind tasting of French and Californian wines in celebration of the US bicentennial. To the surprise of the mostly French judges, California wines took top honours over the prestigious French wines.

The event signaled to the wine world that New World wines had to be taken seriously, and while today's event confirms BC's excellence, BC's wine industry has been focusing on quality for many years. "As a small region, BC's wine industry knows it cannot produce the quantities of wine that other regions produce," says Peggy Athans, executive director of the BC Wine Institute. "Our wineries and winemakers knew long ago that they had to focus on quality. It's gratifying to see BC wines do so well against an established Old World region like Bordeaux, but it's not a surprise."

The top ten results from today's challenge, including their ranking in the 100 point system:

1. 89.32 **Cedar Creek 2002 Platinum Reserve Meritage (BC)**
2. 87.88 **Colio 2000 CEV Reserve Merlot (ON)**
3. 87.39 **Burrowing Owl 2002 Reserve Meritage (BC)**
4. 87.30 **Sumac Ridge 2001 Pinnacle (BC)**
5. 86.70 Chateau Lascombes 2000 (Bordeaux)
6. 86.37 Chateau Pontet-Canet 2001 (Bordeaux)
7. 86.31 **Stoney Ridge 1998 Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve (ON)**
8. 85.72 Chateau Rauzan-Gassies 2000 (Bordeaux)
9. 85.68 **Osoyoos Larose 02 (BC)**
10. 84.83 **Mission Hill Oculus 02 (BC)**

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