

A vine affair



Chapelle Ste. Agnès, located in the Sutton Mountains of Southern Quebec, provided a picturesque backdrop for the magical week-end.

By Angie Gordon

■ Photos: Kate Fellerath Photography

Nicole Archibald and Tom Antony's June 2005 wedding was the stuff of which dreams are made. It helped, of course, that they had a fairytale setting — Chapelle Ste. Agnès, a magnificent vineyard located near Sutton in Quebec's Eastern Townships, owned by Tom's mother, Henrietta Antony, a renowned Montreal antique dealer.

"I had always dreamed of a small intimate wedding," recalls Nicole, "and this was just the perfect place."

However, Nicole was concerned about how to

A spectacular vineyard wedding at Chapelle Ste. Agnès

coordinate everything. Not only was the couple living in Toronto, Nicole was busy doing her medical residency and didn't have the time to make all of the arrangements. Luckily, her mother, Barbara, and Tom's mother agreed to do much of the planning, finding most everything they needed in the Sutton region.

"All of the people we worked with were absolutely amazing," exclaims Nicole. "The florist, Dominique Houle of Le Pois de Senteur, used the most gorgeous peonies both in my bouquet and in the centrepieces."

For her dress, Nicole chose a magnificent Vera Wang wedding gown. "I had tried on so many dresses," explains Nicole. "But as soon as I put on that gown I knew that I'd found exactly what I'd been looking for. It was perfect." Nicole decided on pale apple green Vera Wang dresses for her bridesmaids as well. "They really suited everyone's style," says Nicole, "which was no easy feat since their tastes were all quite different."

She admits to being concerned about asking friends and family from Toronto and her hometown of Barrie, Ontario to travel all the way to the Eastern Townships. But her hesitation was certainly unfounded. Guests were treated to a magical weekend, beginning with the pleasant accommodations, arranged in a myriad of the Townships' renowned bed and breakfasts. Gift baskets placed in each room were filled with suggestions for activities in which to take part, including wine tours and bike trips.

Nicole and Tom were married in the breathtaking, private chapel Henrietta had built on her vineyard in 1993.

"As I walked down the hill towards the chapel, I wasn't the least bit nervous," Nicole recalls. "Everything was exactly as it was supposed to be. I





The magnificent Romanesque-style chapel — named for a 13th century Bohemian Saint Agnès — with its 17th century stained glass windows and many ecclesiastic artifacts, was an enchanting setting for the ceremony.



Vineyard owner – and the groom’s mother – Henrietta Antony, with her son and the bride.

“It was the perfect wedding in the perfect place”

had never been happier in my whole life.”

After the ceremony, and while photos were being taken, guests were invited to take tours of the vineyard, including the exquisite subterranean cellars that provided a welcome respite from the hot summer sun.

Guests were treated to a four-course dinner catered by Auberge le St. Amour. The meal began with asparagus wrapped in an egg pancake with foie gras and truffle oil. Next came salmon done three ways: smoked, maple-glazed and tartar with sesame seeds and wasabi. The main course was chicken with a celery mash and julienne vegetables wrapped in rice paper. To finish it all off, dessert was a raspberry, lemon and white chocolate cake. “The food simply could not have been better,” exclaims Nicole.

Of course, the vineyard’s very own exquisite Chapelle Ste. Agnès ice wine flowed liberally – much to the delight of everyone. There was dancing between courses, with music supplied by Denis Laframboise of Studio DL. Not even a cranky Mother Nature could ruin the night. Midway through the evening, it began to rain, but the DJ and his crew quickly went to the back-up plan and set up under a tent from Tent Orford.

“It only took them 10 minutes and we were dancing again,” says Barbara.

Long after the bride and groom departed, guests continued to celebrate late into the night. The following day Henrietta hosted a brunch for which she had cooked most everything herself. Nicole and Tom, anxious to start their honeymoon on the Caribbean island of Moustique, bowed out early.

“It was the perfect wedding in the perfect place,” says Nicole. She laughs as she recalls that Tom’s brother John, a trained viticulturist who helps runs Chapelle Ste. Agnès, had wanted to paste leaves on the vines which, since it was June, were only just beginning to sprout. However, the budding vines proved the perfect setting, symbolic of Nicole and Tom’s promising new beginning as husband and wife. ☺

Chapelle Ste. Agnès is available to host weddings, parties, corporate events and other affairs. For inquiries, contact John Antony at (450) 538-0303. Check out Chapelle Ste. Agnès at www.vindeglace.com