

## TWILLINGATE



Twillingate caught my interest because it is located on *New World Island* – what a promising name! Only after getting there did I learn that there is a winery in Twillingate: the *Auk Island Winery*, located in the former school house and named after the Great Auk, a large penguin-like bird which was extinct in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century.

When I entered the showroom of the winery I found a great variety of berry wines. Looking at the bottles aligned on the counter my eyes suddenly widened: among the dark bottles on display was one transparent labelled *Vinland white*. I felt very lucky when I could talk to the winery's manager, Danny Brown, who told me that it was the very first year (and, as it turned out, also the last) the winery had produced a grapewine and that the *Vinland white* was made from Concord grapes grown in St. John's. One day the previous fall, Danny had received a phone call from his old schoolmate David Brown who now lived

in town and asked whether the winery was interested in purchasing the grapes that had grown in an abundance in his garden that year.

When I met David Brown in St. John's a few weeks later and he showed me his garden I couldn't believe my eyes: all grapes the *Vinland white* had been produced from had grown on one single vine overgrowing a pergola. This was a cool summer and the grapes were small when I visited David in early August. But he showed me photos his wife had taken of the harvest the year before: amazing 41 gallons (or 180 pounds) had ripened on this single plant!

Danny told me that the name *Vinland white* for the first commercially produced wine from Newfoundland grown grapes hadn't been his idea but his business partner's (who is also the editor of the *Downhome* magazine). The name Danny had in mind for the wine was *Summer Breeze*.





Auk Island Winery



The 2015 Vinland white -  
the first and unfortunately last  
vintage of this Newfoundland-  
grown grape wine →



2014 harvest from David Brown's grapevine: The *Vinland white* was made from these grapes; photo by Regina Brown