

Doing the Okanagan right

Norona hits the area's summer wine festival

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On Aug. 9, Kim and I loaded up the van with our mountain bikes and made our way to our favorite mountaintop destination, Silver Star Mountain Resort, for the Okanagan Summer Wine Festival.



CREDIT: photo submitted
Dave Norona hits the trails at Silver Star Mountain Resort's bike park.

We attended this event last year and there was no way we were going to miss it this year. Plus, it offered us the opportunity to get out of the big city and off into Silver Star's updated and super fun mountain bike park.

Upon our arrival, we quickly unloaded our gear at the Snowbird Lodge before heading off for our first adventure at the Sip and Savor wine and cheese challenge at Clementine's. In front of us were six different wines from the Okanagan and six different Canadian dairy cheeses, all of which had no labels.

Our challenge was to identify which wines and which cheeses they were. We were horrible at this challenge but we made lots of new friends and had a wicked time.

The following day we awoke to chai lattes and fresh chocolate croissants at Bugaboos before hitting the mountain bike park. This year the park is amazing with longer runs, no crowds and bigger stunts to test even the most seasoned downhillers. They've also created some of the best beginner to intermediate trails so new riders can join in on the fun without risking life and limb.

It had rained a bit overnight, which created the perfect dust-free conditions as we hopped the first chair of the morning.

Kim and I took a few easy blue runs to warm up and dial in our bikes. We then hit Double Dog and, with its unique stunts and technical twisty terrain, it was soon our favorite run on the mountain; however, Rock Star, Super Star and Pipe Dream were close second favorites. After dialing runs all day we hit the hot tub to ease our tired muscles before heading off to the Winemasters' Dinner with Hester Creek and St. Hubertus Estate wineries.

The six-course meal was amazing and was paired with delicious wines that brought out the fabulous flavors of the food.

After mountain biking all day Aug. 11, we joined some friends for the afternoon progressive tasting in the middle of Silver Star Village. It was a perfect afternoon of trying some amazing varieties under gorgeous sunny skies. My favorite wines of the festival were from Granite Creek, which is a small estate in the Shuswap area. All of their wines were amazing and their ice wine is to die for.

There's still a lot of time to experience Silver Star's incredible mountain bike park and ride until your heart's content under the hot summer sun. For more information on their great deals check out www.skisilverstar.com or call 1-800-663-4431.

Adventurer Dave Norona needs a little break from wine after experiencing the awesome Okanagan Summer Wine Festival. His wagon break is

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