

**Nk'Mip Cellars (Inkameep)****2006 Chardonnay Qwam Qwmt, Inkameep Vineyards
(Okanagan Valley)**

Established in 1968 by the Osoyoos Indian Band, the Inkameep Vineyard at Oliver has some of the south Okanagan's most mature vines, including the Chardonnay chosen for this reserve-grade Chardonnay. The band, which operates Nk'Mip Cellars in a joint venture with Vincor, dubs its top grade wines as "Qwam Qwmt" - a phrase in the band's Okanagan language that means "achieving excellence."

The band sells Inkameep grapes to as many as 13 different wineries. However, Randy Picton, the winemaker at Nk'Mip since 2003, manages to get perhaps the finest grapes for band's own winery. Some of the Chardonnay wines grow east to west. Picton insists that the north side of the rows be picked days later than the south side, a way of making sure he gets optimally ripe grapes.

Such finicky viticulture shows in this wine's lush flavours and concentration. It begins with aromas of citrus and vanilla. On the palate, there are flavours of pear, ripe tangerine and Scotch marmalade, framed by toasty oak notes achieved by aging the wine 10 months in French oak. While there is evidence of malolactic fermentation, Picton has left a fine spine of acidity. Further aging will ripen this Chardonnay to peak perfection in about three years. 89 points.

Reviewed March 19, 2008 by [John Schreiner](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Nk'Mip Cellars \(Inkameep\)](#)

Vineyard: Inkameep Vineyards

Vintage: 2006

Wine: Chardonnay Qwam Qwmt

Appellation: [Okanagan Valley](#)

Grape: Chardonnay

Price: \$24.99

THE REVIEWER**John Schreiner**

John Schreiner has been covering the wines of British Columbia for the past 30 years and has written 10 books on the wines of Canada and BC. He has judged at major competitions and is currently a panel member for the Lieutenant Governor's Awards of

Excellence in Wine. Both as a judge and as a wine critic, he approaches each wine not to find fault, but to find excellence. That he now finds the latter more often than the former testifies to the dramatic improvement shown by BC winemaking in the past decade.