

# The Cellar Club Inc



*Established in 1980*

## *September 2021 Newsletter*

### *THIS MONTH:*

We were to be entertained in September by **Gordon Russell from Esk Valley**. Gordon is described as one of the Godfathers of the wine industry.

<https://www.eskvalleywines.com/ranges/artisanal-collection>

**Unfortunately**, due to the current situation with the Delta variant of COVID19 this month's Club evening has had to be cancelled. We can't meet until we are down into Level 2.

While this is disappointing for us all, for your information and interest, the wines we were going to be tasting were largely from Esk Valley's new range: Artisanal. These are listed below f.y.i.:

- Y Artisanal Hawke's Bay Chenin Blanc
- Y Artisanal Hawke's Bay Chardonnay
- Y Artisanal Hawke's Bay Gamay Noir
- Y Artisanal Hawke's Bay Syrah
- Y Artisanal Gimblett Gravels Malbec Merlot Cabernet Sauvignon

Y Y Y Y Y Y

Meanwhile, for your reading pleasure we have the rest of the newsletter here, enjoy.

Thanks *Editor*

### *2021 Events Coming Up:*

- Y **13 October** Butterworth Estate, Martinborough with either their Manager Nick Hewitt or Martin Bell their winemaker
- Y **17 November** Crater Rim from Omih Rise, Waipara
- Y **11 December** **PLEASE NOTE THIS DATE** as it is a Saturday for our Cellar Club's Christmas dinner

## Looking Back

Our Aussie evening with Keith Tibble (and his Manager Nick), from EuroVintage was information filled and a great voyage of discovery of the three Western Australian vineyards: Sandalford, Xanadu and Moss Wood. Our intrigue was sated, and the tasting was a really good experience of the different vineyards and the different categories of wines on offer.

As a reminder the vineyards we were introduced to were:

- 🍷 Sandalford
- 🍷 Xanadu
- 🍷 Moss Wood

We had good numbers attend, 44 in total and orders were excellent.

## Wine News

**Do you know what Piquette is and have you tried the NZ version?**

**Piquette Is the Lush, Low-ABV Wine with Old Roots**

**Love a natty or a wine spritzer?**

Light, low in alcohol, and made from waste-optimising practices, piquette ticks every box for what we're wanting to imbibe now. More mellow than a pét-nat, a little bit murky with a subtle fizz, a handful of recent releases suggest that winemakers and drinkers alike have rediscovered the beauty of this humble drop.

Piquette is made from pomace — the grape leftovers from winemaking — and water, which is then left to ferment, resulting in a highly drinkable, crisp, aromatic, sparkling beverage.

It's a method with centuries of history throughout Europe, dating back to the classical period, and more recently was enjoyed by field workers at lunch. As with many old-fashioned practices, piquette feels grounded in a more sustainable way of living. The process harnesses a by-product of the wine industry, helping to minimise waste.

Its earthy flavour and dash of fizz may make it the next favourite tippie for natural wine fans, and piquette also possesses a lightness that will appeal to those of us partial to a wine spritzer. Low in alcohol (most available in New Zealand are between five and seven per cent), piquette gives you less of a buzz, which, in our opinion, is sometimes a nice thing. Piquette also has fewer calories.

All of this makes it unsurprising that this modest, delicious drink is appealing to local winemakers.

Alex Craighead Wines [<https://www.alexrcraighead.co.nz>] launched its 330ml cans of Kindeli piquette in June 2020 (wine-in-a-can has a dear place in our hearts). "It was really interesting from an experimental point of view," founder Alex Craighead tells *Viva*. "*It also sits really well with me as it is adding another step and product to the lifecycle of the grape.*"

Made from certified organic grapes from his biodynamic home vineyard in Nelson, Alex describes Kindeli as something of a hybrid. "*We added a tiny amount of cider ferment to give it a natural spritz. Our piquette is literally naturally produced CO2, grapes and a micro-amount of apples.*"

What makes piquette wine so special, according to Alex, is the reuse that's inherent to its creation. "*There is so much waste in the world at the moment, so using the same grapes for wine, piquette, then in our vineyard compost blend is awesome.*"

There's a delicious Australian piquette, called Atomic Bomb by BK Wine, worth trying, and is available at [<https://everydaywine.co.nz>], who deliver nationwide.

Another local variety on the market is from Garage Project [<https://garageproject.co.nz>]. I've been enjoying its very quaffable piquettes all summer, and reached out to co-founder Jos Ruffell to find out more about their piquette range, Little Crush, which launched late last year.

It was a fruitful idea to come out of the stasis of 2020. *"During lockdown we had more time to tinker with some ideas,"* Jos says. *"Making piquettes was one that just made a lot of sense — and our mate Cosmo said we should make one, so we did!"*

With a relatively simple process and light flavour, it provides opportunities for a wealth of creativity and experimentation. *"We love that piquettes allow you to create a quite different expression from regular wine,"* explains Jos. *"You can build up and layer piquettes — adding in more skins from lots of different varieties you typically wouldn't see together."*

To make them even more unique, we used a variety of grapes not typically used in wine. They give our Little Crush Piquettes bright, juicy flavours you won't find in a glass of Sauv," says Jos. "They're also striking in colour and minimise waste in the winery — everything goes to use."

Locally, the piquette market is small — for now. *"The early adopters seem to be craft brew fans and natural wine drinkers,"* says Alex. However, he predicts it will grow in 2021 as New Zealanders discover the joys of this old, down-to-earth treasure. *"They are a great lower-alcohol alternative to wine and low-carb alternative to beer. They work really well as a glass with a light meal or aperitif."*

Jos sees piquette becoming a charming addition to the family of natural wines on offer in Aotearoa. *"They are a celebration of the harvest — best drunk fresh and not to be taken too seriously and should be at an approachable price for everyone."*

*"They are fizzy, lower alcohol, refreshing and delicious — what's not to like?"* We agree.

By Emma Gleason

Wednesday March 3, 2021

## Screwcaps

Screwcaps are still very welcome, please bring these along to any Club meeting and leave them with Anne, remembering that the cause that benefits from this collection is Kidney Kids NZ and their families.

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