

The Cellar Club Inc



Established in 1980

March 2022 Newsletter

THIS MONTH

**CONFIDANT
WINES**

Providers of Fine Boutique Wines



CASA SANTOS LIMA

With Victor Kattenbelt

Wednesday 9th March

Door price: Members \$15 Guests \$19

As you may be aware, this month's tasting was going to be from **Bald Hills of Central Otago**. Their company has decided that they will not present to the public while Omicron is circulating so widely, so this tasting to us has been postponed.

The Club has been fortunate to be able to secure Victor and Confidant Wines for our evening with only a week's notice. We are not sure of the precise make-up of the wines for the evening at this time, so come along for a surprise evening and enjoy.

Confidant Wines is a small (boutique) local importer of Portuguese wines in Wellington distributing the well-regarded Casa Santos Lima winery and a range of notable NZ wineries that are available in selected retail outlets and a number of Wellington restaurants.

Victor Kattenbelt has been around the Wellington wine scene for a number of years and travels to Europe most years, for wine trade expos in France, Netherlands and Germany, and to visit his suppliers in Portugal. He last presented to us in August 2020

If you are interested in doing more reading on Casa Santos Lima winery, please click on the link here: <https://casasantoslima.com/pt>

Because of the Omicron situation at the moment, we are requesting that everyone brings their own snacks for the evening.

Could everyone who is attending this evening please reply to the Editor that they are coming ASAP – thank you.

Let's Look Out for Each Other

With the new Traffic Light System put in place by the NZ Government, in order to use the Johnsonville Community Centre under COVID19 mandates, you must scan to enter the premises when you arrive and show your vaccine pass to be recorded by Wayne – when you pay for the evening.

The showing of your pass will be a one-off until it expires.

At the moment, the wearing of masks when entering and exiting the Johnsonville Community Centre, plus the distance we have to be settled at, etc is all in play and we've adapted well, thank you.

Your vaccination pass can either be printed or stored on your mobile phone. For people that haven't yet got one of these passes:

- ✓ You need to have had two COVID19 vaccinations
- ✓ If you have a Real Me ID, go into the COVID Record Health site:
<https://mycovidrecord.health.nz>
- ✓ If you don't have a Real Me ID, go into the <https://mycovidrecord.health.nz> and follow the instructions to get access to your medical record, then download/print a copy of your pass
- ✓ Carry this with you in your wallet/purse

This pass will ensure you have all the freedoms you can access for your Summer pleasure.

NB: As always, please if you are feeling unwell, do not attend any of your Club's meetings, thank you

Your committee

Looking Back

The evening with *Everything Pinot* was a tipping success, with 37 people turning up for the Club's own members to present to, plus a special guest for the evening's last pinot – John Dawson with a whisky distilled in pinot barrels from Central Otago's Lammermoor, 'a farm to bottle distillery': [Lammermoor Distillery](#)

We tasted our way through the Club's cellar after our opening pinot Waipara Hills Pinot Noir Rose'. Followed up with three 2017 Pinot Gris, from Peregrine Saddleback, Giesen Marlborough and Church Road McDonald series. The comparisons were quite distinct, and the discussion was good. This as then followed by three 2016 Pinot Noirs, from Peregrine Saddleback Central Otago, Yealands Reserve Marlborough, and Russian Jack Martinborough.

2022 Events Coming Up:

- | | |
|--|---------------|
|  April | To be advised |
|  May | AGM |

Wine News -

Some of New Zealand's best wines are being made by producers who don't actually have their own vines

Jonathan Brookes 05:00, Jan 23 2022

The business of winemaking can be, well, a little dry. Especially if what you are looking for is just something good to drink. But the truth is, who owns and does what, can make a qualitative difference to what ends up in your glass.

My first job in wine was in a shop that proudly only sold “estate bottled” wine, which meant that all of the wines were made by the same people who grew the grapes. The alternative is probably best described by the French term *négociant* winemaking, where wine is made with grapes grown by someone else.

In the old world (Europe), a lot is made of the difference between these two models, and despite winemaking being the end point of both, they are – for legal and taxation purposes – recognised as different types of businesses.

In terms of quality, the general consensus is that wines made by the people who grow the grapes on their own land are better. It makes sense; the farmer who is also the winemaker is invested in the final product from start to end, they understand best how the quality of the fruit they grow determines the quality of the wine they make.

It is also a fair assumption that the grape grower and the *négociant* winemaker might have conflicting financial motivations that don't add up to better wine. Beyond this simple idea of quality control, there is also a sense in which an “estate bottled” wine is a unique expression of the specific place and people that it came from, in a way that wine made from purchased grapes won't be.

In Aotearoa there is less focus on the difference between these two models of how wine gets made. That is probably to do with small artisan farmer-producers, including winemakers, cheesemakers, and other producers, not historically having the same status here as in Europe.

It is also the case that our winemaking history is simply shorter, and so it makes sense that we've looked for trusted brands and flavour profiles, rather than focused on place and tradition as markers of quality, as those places and their traditions are still being established.

What's more, the accessibility of vineyards and winemaking facilities is not the same here as in the Old World. Where in parts of Europe, forgotten or neglected wine regions have provided an opportunity for young adventurous winemakers to establish themselves at a relatively low cost, here the cost of land and plant can act as a prohibitive barrier to entry.

Kiwis motivated to make delicious and interesting wines under their own labels have however found another way and in doing so, are changing the way we think about *négociant* winemaking.

Corofin: Mike and Anna Paterson of Corofin in Marlborough, like the other producers featured here, have neither a winery nor vineyards. Perhaps counterintuitively, it is precisely this lack of a stake in a vineyard that is fundamental to them making wines that are uniquely connected to the sites they come from.

Corofin works mainly with Pinot Noir, with a little chardonnay, and each of their wines come from single sites, small corners of vineyards, all located in the foothills of the southern valleys of Marlborough. Their approach to winemaking is to dial back fruit character and varietal expression, believing that more reserved, savoury wines show better the differences made by the specific geography and geology of the vineyard sites that they want to promote.

This model for making site specific wines is reflective of the best parts of the *négociant* model in Burgundy, where law and tradition codify the unique nature of specific parcels of land, and farmers

and négociant-winemakers are left to focus on their part in allowing those places to best reflect themselves.

The Patersons go a step further by promoting not just the physical growing conditions of their chosen vineyards, but also the family winegrowers who farm those sites. Not only are they in this sense advocates for the most interesting places to grow grapes in their region, they also shine a light on growers who are committed to best quality farming practices.

The best Corofin recommendation I can give you is to take the opportunity to taste each of the site specific Pinots of a given vintage. The differences between each of the wines tells the story of those unique sites. A fascinating and delicious exercise.

This particular one from the meticulously farmed Wrekin vineyard, is bold, savoury and concentrated, reflective of the relatively low yields taken from the site.

A Thousand Gods - Lauren and Simon Sharpe's story is increasingly familiar. New Zealanders who spent a significant part of their lives and careers learning their craft overseas, in their case France, returning with their young family to put those skills to use in their homeland.

Of course, a return home can be challenging for a number of reasons, not least of which is the cost of starting afresh and wanting to establish your own business.

The opportunity to purchase fruit from Churton vineyard in Marlborough, one of the best growers and vineyard sites in the country, and to lease space in a shared wine making facility, meant that the Sharpes were able to establish their label A Thousand Gods relatively quickly after their return, and without the prohibitive capital outlay of purchasing a vineyard, or the lead-time of planting one according to their no doubt exacting standards. Which is all the better for us, as already their wines are some of the most thoughtful, interesting and delicious in the market.

Being able to get their label underway has also allowed them the time and resources for what is next, which is establishing their own small wine making facility, opening up further opportunity to experiment and show off their well-honed craft.

Sauvignon blanc, but not as we know it. A precise balance of texture, perfumed aromatics, and just right acidity that adds up to a glass I just can't put down.

Bryterlater - Some of the freshest and most interesting new New Zealand wines are being made under labels that are a side-hustle for their talented producers.

Ambitious young winemakers, such as Bryterlater's James Graves Opie, are holding down demanding viticultural and winemaking jobs, and make their own wine on the side. Connections made in the industry through their 'day jobs' provide access to both information about where to source the best fruit, as well as access to expensive equipment and unused space, not to mention a network of seasoned professionals willing to lend advice and the odd hand where needed.

Opie, situated in North Canterbury, sources premium organic fruit from local growers, and with it is crafting some impressive wines. His work with Sauvignon Blanc, especially in his sparkling wines, show new and delicious sides to a varietal many of us may have tired of.

I believe it's partly the freedom of financial pressure associated with buying land equipment that gives Opie's approach an air of experimentation, trial and error, and ambition. Like an increasing number of similarly minded winemakers, he's not letting the absence of his own vineyard and winery stop him from producing his own wines. The result is more exciting wines to drink, which is always a good thing.

Yeasty creamy texture and fine bubbles in this delicate sparkler are complemented by gentle pear flavours, all of which offset the shouty fruit forward character normally associated with sauvignon blanc. Really impressive, and super refreshing.

Club Information

President

Murray Jaspers

Murray.jaspers@gmail.com

027 280 0301

Club Address & Treasurer

C/-Wayne Kennedy

17 Stonefield Place

Johnsonville, Wellington 6037

waynekennedy51@gmail.com

Secretary

Jenny Jebson

Jenny.jebson@gmail.com

Editor

Evelyn Dawson

59evelyndawson@gmail.com

Vice President & Membership

Anne Megget

ammegget@gmail.com

Club Website

www.cellarclub.co.nz

Club Bank Account for Internet Banking 06 0541 0056031 00

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.