

# The Cellar Club Inc



*Established in 1980*

## *November 2023 Newsletter*

### *Affordable Celebration Wines for Summer*

#### *A panel discussion with member input*

**Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> November 8pm**

**Members \$15 Guests \$20**



From weekend brunches to housewarming parties to casual happy hours at home, popping a bottle of bubbles generally promises a good time. This tasting has been put together with assistance from our friends at Eurovintage and presents a number of affordable wines from around the world that may well surprise you with their wide range of styles and taste.

And if you then go out and seek one or more of these wines after the tasting, then we will be well pleased. Wines to be tasted will include .

- 🍷 De Bortolli Family Selection Sparkling Brut NV – *Australia* – Our welcome wine
- 🍷 Graham Norton Prosecco D.O.C - *Italy*
- 🍷 Perelada Brut Reserva Spanish Cava NV - *Spain*
- 🍷 Pongracz Sparkling Brut - *South Africa*
- 🍷 Hunter MiruMiru Marlborough Method Traditionnelle Brut - *New Zealand*
- 🍷 Aimery Grande Cuvee 1531 Cremant De Limoux Rose NV - *France*
- 🍷 The Black Chook Sparkling Shiraz NV - *Australia*
- 🍷 Pegasus Bay Encore Noble Riesling - *New Zealand*

The club will supply you with a flute for you to taste the wines, but bring your own flutes or tasting glasses if that is your preference.

As there are eight wines for the evening, members are encouraged to have a good meal before attending the evening.




There will be extra small food supplied for some of the above wines, to enhance the experience, and make the evening extra special.



## *Let's Look Out for Each Other*

As always, please if you are feeling unwell, do not attend the evening's presentation. Thanks

## *Looking Ahead*

-  **December** – Xmas Celebration – *to be held at The Wellington Club, 88 The Terrace, Wgtn*
-  **January** – No BBQ to start the year. – see our comment about the dinner below
-  **February** – Riverby Estate, Marlborough

## *Committee Musings*

**Monthly Meeting Timing** - We have had a number of enquiries from club members over time regarding the time we start the monthly evenings. Due to the presenters who come to our monthly meetings working in the city during the day before they get to us, we have to allow them time to refresh and have dinner. Also, the committee members that set up for the evening may also work, and must have their dinner and refresh, before getting to the hall for the set-up. These people's full lives do not give any lee-way for the meetings to be able to start earlier.

**New Members/Visitors** – Please if you see visitors on their own or new members enter the centre for one of our tastings, invite them to join your table. Getting to know new members and making new friends is part of the purpose of our club, and they may need to be shown where our club's glasses are and have an explanation of our sheet that is supplied to members for writing down their comments on the wines of the month. Thanks.

**January BBQ** – Your committee has decided not to hold a BBQ to start off 2024. Derek has sold his home and will shortly be moving slightly north to Summerset on the Landing. Congratulations Derek, we look forward to still seeing you at your club's monthly tastings.

Your committee is interested in new ways that we might start our year's events going forward and would welcome your suggestions on how we might do this. We have already considered holding a spit roast but the cost implications to members wasn't something we wanted to impose without first canvassing input in a wider forum like the AGM.



**Cellar Master** – With Derek's home no longer available, the intention is to move the cellar to Wayne's home which already has some of the cellar wines. A special thanks to Derek for having performed this task throughout the life of the Club.

## *Looking Back - Maison Vauron 'Le Tour'*

Scott Hurrell presented an interesting and informative evening for us, presenting wines from a number of regions around France. Having spent 12 vintages in France, Scott was able to speak authoritatively about French wine making and how the growers are only allowed to grow certain grapes in certain areas if they want to use the name of their region on their labels e.g., Sancerre, Burgundy and Champagne to name three. They are free to grow new varieties but are not able to export these newer wines using their regional labels.

Scott also mentioned that some French vineyard owners were travelling the world collecting new varieties to try, and finding different ways to grow grapes, trying to be ahead of the effects of climate change to come.

Here is a reminder of the wines we tasted on the evening:

-  Monmousseau Brut "Etoile" NV (Loire Valley/Chenin Blanc, Ugni Blanc)
-  Chateau le Cedre Blandine le Blanc 2021 (Colombard/ Ugni blanc)

- 🍷 Cave de Lugny Macon-Villages 2021 (Burgundy/Chardonnay)
- 🍷 Château Roubine Cotes de Provence Rosé 2022 (Provence/Grenache, syrah, Cinsault)
- 🍷 Burgaud Beaujolais Villages 2022 (Beaujolais/Gamay)
- 🍷 Vieux Lazaret Chateaneuf du Pape 2020 (Rhône Valley/Grenache, Syrah)
- 🍷 Château Baulac-Dodijos Sauternes 2020 (Bordeaux/Sémillon).

Scott's presentation was warmly received by members, and we thank him sincerely for taking the time to visit us.

## *Looking Forward to next month - Xmas Celebration*

This promises to be something special. When the committee realised that we were unlikely to be holding a BBQ in January, it made the decision to switch a large portion of that subsidy toward the Xmas celebration to be held at the Wellington Club, 88 The Terrace on **Wednesday 13 December**.

**Be sure to put this date in your calendar now.**

This venue is special as we will have our own dining room and the food comes highly recommended. But the cost is a little above our normal range, hence the increased subsidy which includes the usual complementary glass of bubbles on arrival.

All will be revealed when we email everyone the menu and cost on or before the 17<sup>th</sup> November. Replies and payment will then be due by the 1<sup>st</sup> December. Fortunately, there is no maximum number so there is no need to rush to reply, albeit we would ask you to respect the 1<sup>st</sup> December deadline so that we can confirm numbers to the Wellington Club.

## *Wine News and other Tit Bits*

### **The Wine Awards are out.**

In case you haven't noticed, two important sets of wine awards were announced in October and we include links here should you wish to check them out.

- New World Wine Awards – The top 50 wines for under \$25 [New World Wine Awards | New World](#)
- 2023 New Zealand International Wine Show Awards [Home | The New Zealand International Wine Show \(nziws.co.nz\)](#)

You will also get the chance to taste 7 gold medal wines from the 2023 NZIWS in April of next year. These have already been purchased and include a number of the trophy wines.

### **Looking for Wine Bargains in Wellington**

Now that the elections are over its time to find some wine bargains to make us smile. I like to visit supermarkets to see if they have any clearance sales. Mainly its Countdown as they have the best.

Here some that I have found:

- 🍷 Johanneshof Gewürztraminer the best in NZ 2022/2021 at \$ 17.50 a bottle normally \$32
- 🍷 Hunting Lodge Expressions Chardonnay 2022 \$10.30
- 🍷 Leveret Estate Chardonnay 2022 \$10
- 🍷 Saint Clair Original Pinot Noir 2022 \$10.15
- 🍷 Yealands Reserve Chardonnay 2021 \$9.30
- 🍷 Waipara hills Chardonnay 2020 \$9.70.

Good hunting. Go check your local supermarket, you may be surprised.

All the best from GARY M the wine bargain finder

*[It is highly likely these are no longer available at these prices. No matter. What our member Gary is highlighting is still relevant. So thanks Gary, hopefully I'll find that next bargain before you do – Ed]*

## Half a century on from first planting of world famous Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc wine grapes

By Samantha Gee, RNZ 21 Sep, 2023



*Te Whare Ra is one of the region's smallest and oldest wineries*

It has been 50 years since the first commercial wine grapes were planted in Marlborough, when Montana Wines founder Frank Yukich claimed wine from the region would become world famous.

He was right. In half a century, the region has achieved worldwide recognition for its Sauvignon Blanc. It makes up close to 90 per cent of the wine New Zealand exports, and the majority of it is grown in Marlborough.

Jane Hunter said it was sheer Irish luck her husband Ernie planted 7 acres of Sauvignon Blanc on farming land in Blenheim's Rapaura Rd in the early 80s.

In 1986, their Fumé Blanc, an oak-aged Sauvignon Blanc, won big at the Sunday Times Wine Festival in London, putting Marlborough on the map.

"People just kept saying you've got to go and taste that wine ... even the wine judges were like, this is so unusual, you've got to taste it and by the time Ernie got back to New Zealand he had letters from the prime minister and [the response from] radio and TV was absolutely amazing."

There are now 163 wineries in Marlborough, making it the biggest wine-producing region in the country.

The region's vineyard producing area has grown from almost 7000ha 20 years ago, to nearly 30,000ha today - about 70 per cent of the national total.

Annually, Marlborough produces 300 million to 400 million bottles of wine - most of it Sauvignon Blanc.

"It's pretty obvious if you drive around Marlborough now, there's just acre after acre, well probably kilometre after kilometre of Sauvignon Blanc," Hunter said.

"In my view the New Zealand wine industry wouldn't exist if it wasn't for Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc."

Pernod Ricard NZ operations director Tony Robb said the industry had undergone significant transformation since Montana's first vines went into the ground in Marlborough in the early 1970s.



*Hunter's Wines on Rapaura Rd, Marlborough*

The global company owns wine brands Brancott Estate, Stoneleigh and Church Road.

Robb said the Kaikōura earthquake caused significant damage to its Marlborough winery seven years ago.

"We've completely redesigned our wine tank standard, so our tanks are now resilient up to a magnitude 8 earthquake and

we've redesigned all the technology around the tank so that our staff no longer need to climb up to the top of them to access the wine."

He said the industry was also facing the challenge of a changing climate.

"Like most people we are preparing our vineyards to be more resilient, able to cope with potentially what could be wetter weather during the summer growing season or drought as well.

"We just have to be prepared for any eventuality."

Some wineries have hit hard times - Sacred Hill collapsed in 2021 owing \$100 million, with its Marlborough Vineyards later bought by VinLink, and Villa Maria was bought out of receivership by the Indevin Group, in the same year.

Anna Flowerday and her husband Jason own Te Whare Ra in Renwick, one of the region's smallest and oldest wineries.

A sixth-generation winemaker who originally hails from South Australia, she said the next chapter for Marlborough will be when people discover it produces more than just great sav.

"I love that people come here because of Sauvignon Blanc, but I'm almost more chuffed when they walk away with something that's not Sauvignon Blanc because equally, we've sort of opened their eyes up to Marlborough is an amazing place for growing so many different varieties."

She said protecting the region's reputation should be every winemaker's main focus.

"If the world suddenly falls out of love with what we do, or we start to lose the trust of consumers, we're in a hurr of trouble.

"That's why I'm so ultra passionate about it and I think everyone who's committed to Marlborough long term should be because it's our reputation for our wines and it's the love of consumers that got us to where we are, that's to be protected at all costs."

Meanwhile, the demand for New Zealand's wine overseas continues to grow. Exports hit a record \$2.4 billion in the year to May, up \$450m on the year before.

## Historic farming family's chardonnay breaks into supermarkets

*by Matthew Hampson, Stuff 13:00, Oct 21 2023*



A Marlborough family which has farmed the same piece of land for 143 years decided eight years ago that creating their own wine would become part of their history.

Caythorpe Family Estate's third-ever vintage of chardonnay has now been voted one of the top bottles of wines in the country, and will be sold in supermarkets across New

Zealand for the first time.

Their 2021 chardonnay received a gold medal, the champion chardonnay trophy, and the White Wine of the Show title at this year's New World Wine Awards, meaning it will be on the shelves of more than 140 New World supermarkets for five weeks.

"It's been a big job, but it's also been an incredible opportunity for us to get the brand out there, and a lot of people will be able to experience it that have never experienced it before, which is cool," said Caythorpe Family Estate director Simon Bishell.

Bishell was the fifth generation of his family to farm the same patch of Marlborough since his great-great-grandfather bought the land in 1880.

Used solely as a mixed cropping farm for most of its history, Bishell's parents planted cherry trees there in 1897, and the first grapevines the year after.

But it wasn't until 2015 that they decided to retain some of the grapes they grew to create their own wine label, giving birth to Caythorpe Family Estate. "I think the future of farming in New Zealand is all about adding as much value as you can at the farm gate, and this fits nicely into that. We want to try and add more value to the fruits of our labour on the vineyard and reaping some of that reward," Bishell said.

“We've got the sixth generation (of our family) coming through. They're just very young now, but in the fullness of time, if they wanted to choose a career back in the family business, then if we can build a successful wine brand into the portfolio.

“I guess it gives the family business more breadth and scope, and more opportunity for people to be involved.”

Bishell said their gold medal-winning bottle of wine was “only our third vintage of chardonnay”, made from grape vines planted only six years ago. “I think as the vines mature and as we become sort of more confident in what we're doing, its only up from here. There's still a lot to learn, and I think we can get better, so it's also been really cool to win the award with, I guess, such a young vineyard, and not a lot of chardonnay experience under our belt.”

New World Wine Awards judges co-chair Sam Kim said Caythorpe's entry was a “standout” amongst this year's medallists. “The family has been farming in Marlborough for generations but has only been operating their own wine brand for the past eight years,” Kim said.

“With a very small team running the wine business, one of whom also looks after the family's cherry orchards when he's not among the vines, this is truly a toast-worthy win.

“It's a great opportunity for the brand to reach new customers, as well as a wonderful example to show how Marlborough's breadth and depth extends well beyond its much-loved sauvignon blanc.”

Other Marlborough-made winners include wines from Black Cottage, Esk Valley, Giesen and Ara, The Coterie's Massey Dacta, Misty Cove, Mount Riley, SOHO Family Vineyards, Stoneleigh, te Pā and

Montford Estate, Triplebank and Vavasour.

## *Screwcaps*

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

## *Club Information*

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