

The Cellar Club Inc



Established in 1980

JULY 2025 Newsletter

Mid-Winter Dinner



Le Bouillon Bel Air Restaurant

88 Tory Street

Wednesday 11th July, 7pm for seating at 7:30pm

The concept of the “Bouillon parisien” dates back to the late 19th century in Paris, originally established to offer nourishing and affordable meals to workers. Not the fancy part of the French cuisine, but an authentic and comforting cooked food just like at home.

As usual we will have welcome bubbles on your arrival at the restaurant.

This is a great time to get out those French wines that you have in your wine cellars to share with friends at the meal.

As advised by Wayne earlier in June, this venue was previously the home of the Vietnamese Restaurant 88 and is opposite Harvey Norman and Moore Wilsons on Torry street. As such, it is a short walk from the Courtenay Place/Tory Street intersection and public transport.

The menu for the evening:

Entrée:

Coquille Saint Jacques – Seared scallops with a velvety cauliflower cream, baked in the shell with a herb and cheese crust

Saucisson Brioche Lyonnais – traditional sausage roll: warm brioche pastry wrapped around a French saucisse, baked to order and served with a pistachio mayonnaise

Millefeuille de Butternut et Chevre – delicate layers of filo pastry filled with roasted butternut squash and goat cheese crumble

Plat de Resistance:

Poisson Grille a L’Unilaterale – Crisp-sinned market fish grilled on one side seared with bacon hock and cannellini bean puree, chorizo crumb, parmesan crisp and fresh herbs

Celeri-Rave Roti Aux Truffles – Roasted celeriac with truffle, served with a truffled peppercorn sauce and crispy kumara

Notre Pot-Au-Feu Traditionnel – a timeless French dish of slow-braised beef and root vegetables in a delicate clear broth.

Dessert:

Tarte Chocolat' Caramel Et Noix De Pecan – Rich chocolate, caramel and pecan tart with vanilla ice cream

Ronde Fondante Rhubarb & Cannelle – Cinnamon blondie with poached rhubarb, vanilla mousseline, blackberry gel, crisp meringue and mixed berry sorbet

Pudding de Dattes au Caramel et Nois de Coco – Warm Sticky Date Pudding with Coconut Crumble, served with Coconut Sorbet

This will be a truly memorable French Mid-Winter Meal for all who attend!

Wayne will be in touch shortly with a seating plan for the evening

Let's Look Out for Each Other

As always, please if you are feeling unwell, do not attend the evening's dinner. **But please let Wayne or Terry know immediately if you cannot attend the dinner.** Thank you.

Looking Back – **Bladen Wines** presented by Blair Macdonald

What a brilliant evening, presented by the Owners son who is someone who is involved in all aspects of the vineyard and grew up helping with the set up and expansion of same.

We had 34 club members attend, with a good number of orders.

The wines are made in the Alsatian-style, rather than French or Italian style, which makes them on the slightly drier side, and entirely enjoyable!

It was nice to hear the pitfalls that the owners have gone through with the set-up involving the terroir and the different varieties they wanted to grow, the solutions that were presented to them that they accepted and the way the business has grown with that vision intact.

The wines we tasted during the evening were:

- 🍷 Pinot Noir Rosé 2023 – our welcome wine
- 🍷 Pinot Gris 2023
- 🍷 Sauvignon Blanc 'Five Barrels' 2023
- 🍷 Riesling 'Eight Rows' 2024
- 🍷 The Sum of Us 2023 *made up of Gertz, Pinot Gris and Riesling*
- 🍷 Gewurztraminer 'Tilly Vineyard' 2024
- 🍷 Pinot Noir

As a reminder to members: Bladen is now closed for tastings for the Winter; re-opening 25th October 2025, at 83 Conders Bend Road, Renwick. www.bladen.co.nz

Looking Ahead:

🍷 **August – Gibbston Valley**, Central Otago

🍷 **September** – Ohau Wines, Horowhenua

🍷 **October** - tbc

Wine News – Horticulture: Kiwi start-up's Catnip Wine Ready for Export

The Country - 27 May, 2025

A new horticultural initiative could transform New Zealand into a commercial catnip producer, paving the way for the export of locally made pet wines to international markets.

Catnip (or *Nepeta cataria*) was introduced to New Zealand as a garden herb in 1870 and is estimated to positively impact mood in about two-thirds of cats while helping to soothe anxiety in dogs.

Global demand for catnip is rising, driven by pet product manufacturers and natural health industries.

The catnip essential oil market alone is projected to grow by 5.8% annually by 2030 to reach \$400 million.

Kiwi start-up, Muttley's Estate, is believed to be the world's first manufacturer to have created a shelf-stable pet wine that can be stored for up to 12 months. The breakthrough has made large-scale production and export more viable.

John Roberts, director of Muttley's Estate, said catnip was a resilient crop that had adapted to grow well in New Zealand's temperate climate and well-drained soils since it was first introduced.

He said the commercial-scale farming of catnip would further diversify New Zealand's horticultural sector.

Roberts said, with a growing domestic footprint, the company had now set its sights on the lucrative US market, where pet owners sought premium, novelty products for their furry companions. "One of the key advantages of catnip is that even a small crop yields enough to produce a batch of pet wine, allowing us to create a high-value product without requiring extensive land investment," he said.

"With the growing international interest in catnip and the 'humanification' of pet diets, it was a natural extension to explore the development of a premium beverage for pet owners to celebrate with their pets."

Roberts said Muttley's Estate had already signed more than 40 retailers since launching the range in New Zealand less than a year ago. "We believe the reputation of NZ's wine sector in North America will help us establish an entry into this market and we [are] now actively looking for US distributors."

Roberts said research showed the impact of chronic anxiety and stress among pets had become more prevalent due to a combination of urbanisation, multi-pet household dynamics, ongoing issues relating to the pandemic and shifting lifestyles.

"International studies have found almost a third of dogs showed high sensitivity to noise, with fireworks a particular problem, while 29% of dogs were said to be highly fearful, and 14% showed highly problematic aggression.

"Symptoms of anxiety in cats are often more subtle, yet owners reported signs of tail flicking, avoiding eye contact, and shifting head/body away repeatedly [every week or every other day] or more often than usual."

He said the range was created to help alleviate some of the modern stressors on pets, but unlike conventional wines, the products contained zero alcohol. "The range offers multiple 'varietals,' each

featuring a different concentration of catnip: lighter whites such as the Champawgne appeal more to cats, while the deeper blends such as the Purrno Noir and Pawt are popular with dogs,” he said.

Muttley’s Estate is already selling through veterinary clinics and pet retailers across New Zealand.

It has also held tasting events at local dog parks.

“We were overrun by canines wanting to taste the pet wine, and it demonstrated the positive response across a wide variety of breeds,” Roberts said.

The company was now working with New Zealand Trade and Enterprise to identify distributors in overseas markets. “We’d love to see entire fields of catnip grown right here,” Roberts said.

“The idea that we could turn a small backyard experiment into a nationwide horticultural endeavour, and share it with pet lovers worldwide, is really exciting. “It’s a chance for New Zealand to do something fresh and unexpected - yet again.”

The company is also investigating the potential of catnip for human consumption, with trials under way to determine its suitability for the human market.

“Catnip is related to the mint family, so it is safe for humans,” Roberts said.

“We’re working with food technologists to explore the possibilities.”

Corks pop as UK loosens wine rules - *The signing of the UK-NZ trade deal was ‘just the start of the journey’, official says after update to reduce wine barriers*

Newsroom by Sam Sachdeva

New Zealand wines now have a smoother pathway into the United Kingdom, with one British official saying the changes show the value of the “living, growing” trade deal between the two countries.

Government officials and ministers from both countries met in London last month for the joint UK-NZ ministerial trade committee set up to monitor the free trade agreement signed in 2022.

Following the committee meeting, the UK formally agreed to accept exports of New Zealand wine made using ammonium chloride, agar, alginic acid, and potassium ferrocyanide (used to adjust the stability, clarity and acidity of wine).

Frazer MacDiarmid, the British High Commission’s lead trade policy adviser, told Newsroom the winemaking changes were a good example of the trade deal’s status as a “living, growing agreement”.

Wine Fair, Tuesday 24th June @ The Wellington Club

Some of your committee attended, by invitation, a Wine Fair at The Wellington Club on Tuesday 24th June. The evening showcased the rich diversity of NZ’s wines and their distinctive winemakers from boutique producers across the country. And introduced most of us to a number of the smaller vineyards from Central to Matakana.

If you would like to google some of the vineyards or hear more about them, these were the vineyards at the evening:

- Y Schubert, Martinborough- est. in 1998
- Y Hans Herzog, Blenheim - planted in 1996
- Y Te Motu, Waiheke Island – est. in 1999 - the oldest family-owned vineyard on the island
- Y Puriri Hills, Auckland – set up in 1996 – they make red wines in the French style
- Y Rock Ferry, Blenheim - set up in 2005 – organic new world wines [10 varieties]
- Y Valli, Central Otago – est. in 1993
- Y Dragon Bones, Waitaki Valley, North Otago off-grid – est. 2005

- Y Organised Chaos, Clive, Hawkes Bay
- Y Mon Cheval, Waipara
- Y Zenkuro Sake, Central – est. 2015 - *rice and yeast are imported from Japan, they want to change the public perception of how to drink this*
- Y Corofin, Blenheim
- Y Gillman, Matakana – est. 1998 – *they make unapologetically only red wines*
- Y Julz – Collaboration Wines, Hawkes Bay – est. 2010

The evening was an interesting sampling from some great vineyards, with above average priced wines that were discounted for the evening. It was nice to be able to talk with the growers/wine makers about how they produce the product and about their differing views on terroir etc.

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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