

# The Cellar Club Inc



*Established in 1980*

## *September 2026 Newsletter*

### *Del Mondo - Argentinian Evening*

*presented by Lucas Monge*

**Wednesday 9th<sup>th</sup> September, 8pm Start**

**Door Price: Members \$16/ Guests \$22**

**'Once upon a bottle shoppe . . .'**

It's not just a drink in a glass; it's the whole story behind it. The people, culture and place.

Del Mondo was established in Wellington by Lucas Monge, who imports and distributes sought-after traditional wine varieties from Argentina, Italy, Spain and France, from producers who believe wine is not just a drink in a glass, producers that have proven passion for wine craftsmanship, land and sustainability.

Tonight, we are focussing on wines from Argentina. Nearly 60% of Argentina's population have Italian heritage. This demographic link has profoundly shaped not only Argentina's culture, language and gastronomy but also the values expressed through the wines.

- 🍷 Welcome Wine, Senta, is a bottle fermented Italian Semi-Sparkling Wine
- 🍷 2025 San Felipe Classic Malbec Rose *from 'La Rural' one of the country's oldest and most historic wineries founded in 1885 by Felipe Rutini.*
- 🍷 San Felipe Chardonnay Barrel Select *crafted by San Felipe vineyards, from the foothills of the Andes, this wine combines fresh fruit with subtle oak complexity.*
- 🍷 2023 Rutini Chardonnay *a refined wine known for its vibrant straw-yellow colour, has a delicate oak influence*
- 🍷 2024 Trumpeter Malbec by Rutini *from a selection of vineyards 1,000-2,000m above sea level in the Uco Valley.*
- 🍷 2023 Rutini Cabernet-Malbec *combining the structure of Cabernet Sauvignon with the aromatic richness of Malbec, aged 12 months in French oak*
- 🍷 2023 Rutini Malbec *is a deep violet-red colour, aged 12 months in French oak*

**Please Note:** that if you order any wines on the night, you will receive an email confirming your order that will also contain a secure link for online credit card payment to Del Mundo.

Lucas from Del Mundo has kindly donated the night's raffle prize of a bottle of Rutini Malbec, valued at \$65!

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

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

## *Looking Back – Riverby Presented by Kevin Courtenay*



*The wines for the evening, displayed before the tasting began.*

Kevin was informative and entertaining giving us updates of the whole wine industry within New Zealand and also overseas. It would seem that the consumption of wines world-wide is down and vineyards are making the hard decisions to wrap up their businesses or

continue in a smaller market after COVID19.

The costs associated with winding up a vineyard, i.e. pulling out infrastructure, grapes, roots, as well as the barrels in stock, etc costs about \$6,000 per ha. He mentioned that some Marlborough vineyards were converting to garlic.

Riverby exports 80% of their wines to Korea, mostly Sauvignon Blanc, and also to the UK, Greece, Taiwan and Japan. Their Pinot Gris and Reisling are the biggest sellers overall.

They aim for citrusy wines, and this was certainly able to be tasted on a lot of the evening wines. Also they aim for a slightly dry finish, as opposed to sweet.

The wines for the evening were the below selection, although Kevin had other wines from their stock on the price list that he was prepared to open if people wanted to try those:

- 🍷 Welcome Wine - RE Gruner Veltliner 2024 – *slightly dry but full fruit taste with a hint of pepper and held in stainless steel as this grape doesn't need any oak*
- 🍷 RE Pinot Gris 2025 – *this turned out to be the driest Pinto Gris they've ever made and was full of flavour*
- 🍷 OVB Sauv/Semillion White Blend 2021 – *this mix is made like White Bordeaux with 70% Sauvignon and 30% Semillion, put in old oak, then new oak – a really good food wine*
- 🍷 Cicada Gewurztraminer 2025 – *these grapes are not grown by Riverby and has only been made since 2013. However, this is now one of their biggest sellers! Very low acid and off-dry with rose petals on the nose. This label was one they inherited from a Sydney importer they used to deal with.*
- 🍷 Sali's Block Reisling – *15gm residual sugar and off-dry. If you want to check how sweet a reisling is they should have this information on the back of the label. Scandinavia takes a lot of this grape variety wine.*
- 🍷 RE Pinot Noir 2022 – *dry on the tongue with after taste of citrus and pepper, this wine goes well with venison.*
- 🍷 RE Reserve Pinot Noir 2023 – *black fruit on the nose and in the mouth, this reserve ages well.*

## Looking Ahead:

🍷 **October** – JK Wines, Italian wines

🍷 **November** – Beach House, Hawkes Bay

🍷 **December** – Christmas Dinner at The Wellington Club, 88 The Terrace, Wgtn.

**NB:** In line with the survey results where members indicated that they would prefer something mid-year that is local and less costly, then a lift for Christmas we have booked The Wellington Club for our Club's end of year celebration. An indication of numbers at this stage would help your committee with planning for this event.

## Wine News – J'Ville Club Del Mundo Evening with French Wines

Some of your club members went up to the Johnsonville Club for a tasting of French wines with accompanying platters. It was an interesting and tasty evening.

The wines we sampled were:

🍷 2023 Le Blanc de Laubespain: Cabernet Sauvignon 100% *and yes this was a white wine, with the variety being from grape vines that are over 40 years old. They had minimal skin contact and had 12 months in oak. This was a light wine to drink and quite smooth.*

🍷 2024 Rose de Laubespain: Cabernet Sauvignon 100% *this was a good contrast to the first wine with the same grape treated differently with the outcome being a different tasting wine. These vines are over 20 years old and the wine had a backbone of melon with savoury and tangy tastes too.*

In France grapes are picked and sorted by machine, with the unripe grapes discarded by the machine as it sorts, so the wines they turn out contain only ripe grapes.

🍷 2020 Les Charmes: Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot (Cuvee) *we learnt that the word 'Cuvee' translated as good quality, whether the wine is sparkly or not; thought the wine is made of the first 1,000 litres of product. This was a classic example of a Bordeaux wine and is their Estate Wine 50% Cabernet Sauvignon/50% Merlot, exposed in concrete vats for 12 months so as not to have any vanilla notes when the wine is aged in the bottle for three years following the concrete vat!*

🍷 2021 Chateau Carmenere Grand Vin: Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot/Carmenere *Grand Vin translates as The Great Wine, and this mixture was in new French Oak for 24 months. This wine was 65% Cabernet Sauvignon/16% Carmenere/20-ish% Merlot.*

*France nearly lost the Carmenere grapes for ever, as in the 1800's with the 'world-wide' grape devastation of wine blight their vineyards were left bereft of a lot of grape varieties. This was a phylloxera epidemic. French vintners went to Chile in the 1990's and discovered what they were growing as Merlot, was in fact Carmenere grapes! So with the art of grafts, etc, France resumed growing their favourite grape variety again.*



🍷 2020 Audace: Carmenere 100% *this is a flagship wine of the Bordeaux region, having been in oak for 42 months, there is only 500 bottles per year when the grapes are 'right' and we had two of the last three bottles that Lucas had. Gordon brought the last one 😊*

This was an enjoyable evening, hosted by the J'Ville Club and Lucas of Del Mondo and was the second evening the Club has held this year, the first being an Argentinian food match evening.

We will keep club members abreast of any further wine evenings planned at the J'Ville Club, as we can easily pop up and join in [for this admission price].

## **NZ's Longest-running wine festival shelved with organisers place it 'on hold for 2027**

*Taken from Stuff article Aug 20<sup>th</sup>, 2026*

The Marlborough Wine & Food Festival, first held in 1985 when Marlborough had just four wineries, has been cancelled for 2027. This news comes following what organisers called 'a number of difficult but necessary discussions'.

The festival had been scheduled for Saturday, February 13<sup>th</sup> 2027, though tickets had not yet been released for sale.

## **Thousands of grapevines uprooted as Indevin departure cuts Gisborne's vineyards in half**

*Murray Robertson Gisborne Herald 21 Aug, 2026*

Thousands of grapevines have been uprooted around the Gisborne district after a decision by Indevin Group to cease operations in the region. Indevin has been part of the Gisborne region since 2010.

Local growers described the move as "a significant blow", with more than half of the district's vineyards pulled out of the ground.

Indevin, New Zealand's largest wine producer, confirmed its decision to cut its Gisborne supply of grapes in May. Indevin Group chief executive Simon Limmer, in a statement at the time, said leaving Gisborne came after a thorough review of the group's supply and demand position. "It was a difficult decision to exit grape supply from Gisborne ahead of the 2027 harvest."

Limmer said the decision reflected declining demand for Gisborne fruit and the need to align the group's supply base with confirmed customer demand and long-term portfolio priorities.

Mark Thompson of GisVin who chairs Gisborne WineGrowers, said the immediate future for the grape industry in the region was "pretty bleak". "Just over 50% of the region's vineyards have been removed, and more mothballed.

"While locally significant, this is in line with national and global trends of a diminishing appetite for wine, which has led to vine pulls across the global winemaking economy. Gisborne appears to be the hardest hit in New Zealand," Thompson said.

"Next steps to be taken have been discussed in meetings facilitated by Gisborne WineGrowers and supported by NZ WineGrowers, local MPs, Trust Tairāwhiti and MPI [Ministry for Primary Industries]. "All stakeholders have been invited to discuss where we are as an industry."

Thompson said the good news, according to NZ Wines research, was that Kiwi wine was in demand across New Zealand's key export markets in Asia, North America and Britain. "In fact, the fruit-forward, clean, crisp white wine style that Gisborne produces is one of the few growth categories in a declining wine market."

NZ Wines Vintage Report found New Zealand produced 440,000 tonnes of grapes.

"There has been an increasing oversupply problem from the 2024 and 2025 vintages. This reduction in production goes a small way towards correcting that current oversupply."

Thompson said the forecast for the 2027 vintage was that the oversupply would be smaller again. "World buyers are starting to realise this and more inquiries are being made about available wine stocks, with a reducing amount of wine in stock."

Gisborne's boutique wine producers are tapping into this style with reputably good results, he said. Hawke's Bay vineyards have also been affected by the Indevin decision, although Thompson said the impact was less severe there than in Gisborne. "Major players have swooped on some undervalued vineyards."

Indevin's Limmer earlier said the company was deeply grateful for the contribution of Gisborne growers and their Gisborne teams. "We have been committed to managing this transition with care and respect. Like much of the New Zealand wine industry, we are navigating challenging market conditions.

"We have been engaging directly with impacted growers and our Gisborne teams and will manage this transition carefully and respectfully. The future role of the Gisborne winery is under review," Limmer said.

"As New Zealand's largest wine company, we recognise our responsibility to help lead the industry through these conditions. We remain focused on the long-term sustainability of our business and the New Zealand wine industry."

## *Club Information*

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