

WINETALK

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WINE CONNOISSEURS CLUB OF HAMILTON

August 2019

Coming Functions

Aug 11	Linden Estate tasting
Sept 8	Pask tasting
Oct 13	Cellar wines tasting - TBC
Nov 10	Maison Noire tasting
Dec xx	Xmas – date to be confirmed

THE WORLD'S TOP 50 VINEYARDS

Two New Zealand vineyards have been named among the world's top 20 at a new awards ceremony in London, **The World's Top 50 Vineyards**, created to honour the best in wine tourism.

1500 wineries were nominated by an International Academy of wine experts where the total experience of these vineyards was judged. The criteria was not only the quality of the wine. Judges also looked at the terroir, the diversity of grape varieties, sustainability, the setting, geographical features and the design and architecture of the vineyard complex.

A family owned Argentinian winery, Zuccordi di Valle de Uco took the top spot. The Uco Valley vineyard complex was described as an "architectural gem" with stunning views of the Andes Range, and 'terroir' driven wines expressing the high altitude limestone terroir of the region.



New Zealand's Rippon, a biodynamic family owned vineyard on the shores of Lake Wanaka was named the eighth best in the world and the best in Australasia. Rippon's stand out features were said to be its "jaw droppingly" beautiful views from the shores of Lake Wanaka and "stunningly sleek biodynamic wines which include fine terroir focused noble varieties such as Pinot Noir, Riesling and Gewurztraminer".



Craggy Range winery in Hawkes Bay was placed 11th and was the only other New Zealand winery to feature in the top 50. It was praised for its luxury accommodation and award-winning restaurant. As well as its "multi region" (Hawkes Bay, Martinborough and Marlborough) Single vineyard wines. Everything from aromatic whites to Bordeaux blends and terroir Syrahs and Chardonnays.



Awards founder Andrew Reed said the awards are designed to acknowledge vineyards that offer the "total package" saying: "Wine is a reflection of its individual surrounds, its terroir and their design and architecture. The diversity was incredible, modern architectural wonders alongside small boutique wineries. It was the Total

Experience. The world's fifty best vineyards offer the most amazing places to visit, taste wine and learn about winemaking."

South America dominated the top ten with Chile garnering the most awards at the ceremony at London's Banqueting House, with 8 vineyards in the top 50. Spanish and Portuguese wineries were placed ahead of French, Italian, German and Australian wineries.

As it happens, our President Karen Nixey is going to a wedding at Rippon in January so she is my roving reporter down there and will report back on the award and Rippon. Go Karen, taste that Rippon!

WINESPEAK: WHAT IS BIODYNAMIC WINEMAKING?

Often called the Harry Potter School of Mystical Winemaking, biodynamic wines are made employing biodynamic methods both to grow the fruit and during the post-harvest process.

Biodynamic wine production uses organic farming methods, while also employing soil supplements prepared according to Rudolph Steiner's instructions and following a planting calendar that depends on astronomical configurations and lunar spheres, treating the earth as a living and receptive organism. A biodynamic wine means the grapes are farmed biodynamically at the vineyard and did not use manipulations like yeast additives or acidity adjustments. I think cow's horns come in here somewhere - buried in the ground to nurture the soil!

ORGANIC farming is different. Organically grown grapes avoid synthetic pesticides or additives or to take it a step further, 'ORGANIC' wine is made from organically grown grapes without added sulphites (though naturally occurring sulphides occur).

VINTAGE 2019 - SMALL BUT STUNNING. - A REPORT FROM THE NEW ZEALAND WINEGROWERS' ASSOCIATION

A warm summer has contributed to a superb vintage for New Zealand wine regions, with 413,000 tonnes of grapes harvested during Vintage 2019. Although smaller than anticipated, the quality of the harvest is being touted as exceptional from the top of the North Island to the bottom of the South Island.

NZ Winegrowers' CEO, Philip Gregan says a high quality harvest is good news for the industry as export growth continues with an increase of 4% to \$1.78 billion on the last year. "We have an international

reputation for premium quality and innovation. Every vintage is different, but winemakers are excited about the calibre of wine that will be delivered to the bottle and we are confident the 2019 Vintage will be enjoyed by consumers around the world."

However, Vintage 2019 is the third harvest in a row that is smaller than expected, so volume growth is expected to be constrained.

"Smaller vintages in 2017 and 2018 meant wineries had to work to manage product shortages and many of our producers hoped for a larger harvest. This year a smaller than expected vintage will mean more supply and demand tension overall", says Mr Gregan.

Wine is New Zealand's sixth largest export good and is exported to more than 100 countries.

A LOOK AT AN EARLY 2019 RELEASE

Bob Campbell, New Zealand's Master of Wine has been looking at the early release 2019 vintage wines. He is very impressed with the Nelson releases and says the Nelson area has had a very good harvest. He has recommended an early release Old Coach Road, [Siegfried Estate 2019 Sauvignon Blanc](#). "It is fresh, succulent and full of flavour with Passionfruit and Capsicum flavours. Just delicious and so exciting to taste the freshness after having been drinking more reds over the winter." He said he always has his Sav Blanc with salty Feta cheese and seafood as it makes the wine richer and creamier. The winery have a RRP of \$14.99 but he said it would be available in supermarkets in August probably for \$12 or even less. He said there is nothing to be gained by cellaring it. Just enjoy the freshness.



WHAT ARE YOU DRINKING?

Rob Crawford and Catherine Wallace have been into the Syrahs lately and can recommend: Spade Oak [Heart of Gold 2014](#) (Tempranillo) with four stars from Raymond Chan. Also Askerne [Hawkes Bay Syrah 2015](#), Brookfields [Back Block Syrah 2017](#), Huntaway [Reserve Hawkes Bay Syrah 2017](#). Good winter drinking.

Vice-President Diane Gras has recommended a [Baby Doll Sav](#) from Marlborough, good price \$15 at Countdown. Very yummy with BBQ prawns. And of course [The Ned](#), always good whites or rosés. Our pick of the reds is a Grant Burge [Ink Shiraz](#) from the Barossa. We served this with Silver Farms lamb loin steaks. (Love Silver Farms - buy when on special). Jon is a beer drinker! He has found a new one - Krombacher, a German beer reasonably priced from Countdown (he usually drinks Aussie beer!)

HEADS UP FOR THE NZ INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL. LIDO CINEMA, HAMILTON 21 AUGUST - 18 SEPTEMBER

Wine enthusiasts and filmmakers, David Nash and Simon Mark-Brown have created a remarkable documentary comparing wine making in France and New Zealand, asking "Are we deserving of a seat at the table with the world's finest yet?"

A SEAT AT THE TABLE

New Zealand's Wine Story

click image above to view trailer

The film is a vine-saturated visual feast highlighting pivotal moments in our winescape with blind tastings by

the world's best and most influential wine critics, looking at our first attempts at the Sav Blanc in Marlborough, first plantings of Pinot Noir in the desert (Central Otago) and how Ata Rangi based its wine making on a mysterious clone taken from smuggled Burgundian cuttings. It follows the phenomenal rise of our wine business and a showcase of local wine pioneers and their French confreres talking about how faith and fortune favour the brave.

A 'Seat at the Table' entertainingly and with great humour explores Franco-Kiwi discussions, comparing screwcap v cork and key wine styles, New Zealand's growing wine identity and whether we are deserving of a 'seat at the table'. It is the definitive New Zealand wine story benchmarked against some of the greatest producers in the world.

With so much wine being discussed, tasted and celebrated it demands you have a glass of wine in your hand at the ready to quench your thirst. Enter the theatre empty handed at your peril.....

Times of the showings are: Sat 7 Sept 6pm, Sun 8 Sept 7.30pm and Wed 11 Sept 1.45pm. I will be there, glass in hand on Sat 7 Sept at 6pm. See you there.

Call me on 027 622 1005 if you want to know more!

As Baroness Phillipine de Rothschild said: "Wine making is really quite a simple business. Only the first two hundred years are difficult."

Gay Main