

WINETALK

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WINE CONNOISSEURS CLUB OF HAMILTON

December 2019

Coming Functions

Dec 07	Xmas Function
Jan 11	January BBQ (casual format)
Feb 09	TBC
Mar 14	Bushmere Estate – TBC
Apr 19	Georges Road – TBC

HAVE A GO AT UNUSUAL SUMMER WINES

What a great tasting last month with Maison Noire. It was interesting in that we got to taste different wines and all very good quality. Guillaume and his wife were delightful and we must visit their vineyard next time we are in Hawkes Bay. Two of

the more interesting and rarer white wines tasted was the Arneis and the Chenin Blanc ideal for summer outdoors and lighter summer food. Give them a go.

ARNEIS

Arneis is a white Italian wine variety from the Piedmont Region of north west Italy. It has been rescued from the verge of oblivion and is now enjoying a revival. By the 1960's just a few hectares of Arneis vines remained and only a handful of producers in Italy were growing it as they turned to the more popular Nebblio grape, the famous red wine of Piedmont. However one producer Alfredo Curroda of a well-known Vietti wine family, who produce some of the world's most sort after red wines, devoted a great deal of time and energy to this endangered grape. There are now more than 605 hectares of Arneis grapes in Piedmont and it is becoming popular for a summer drink.

Arneis is a very versatile wine, mildly complex, off-dry aromatic with subtle aromas of pear, yellow peach and mint with a hint of orange rind. It has a refreshing citrus acidity on the palate with a hint of lychee and golden liquid honey. The name derives from the Piedmontese word for 'Little Rascal' mainly because it is a 'troublesome' variety - low yielding and susceptible to powdery mildew in warm seasons, it struggles to retain levels of acidity. However it is a delightful different wine ideal with seafood, especially Calamari, a Waldorf salad and light hors d'oeuvres. It is also recommended with spaghetti with garlic and olive oil. Give it a go. Maison Noire's Arneis was given 5 stars by Yvonne Lorkin.

CHENIN BLANC

I love Chenin Blanc. When we did the Wairarapa wine tour, the Margrain Chenin Blanc was the best wine on the whole tour (besides their gorgeous reds) for me. Ordered heaps and when finished tried to get more but it was so popular they were 'taking names' for the next season.



Also known as 'Pineau de la Loire' among other names in France, it is a white wine grape variety from the Loire Valley. Its high acidity means it can be used to make everything from sparkling wines to dessert wines and also offers Chardonnay flavours with oak-aged styles and has the ability to adapt to a wide variety of tastes.

Outside the Loire it is grown extensively in New World wine regions and it is the most widely planted variety in South Africa where it is known as STEEN. It was taken to South Africa in the 17th century when the Huguenots fled from Europe (You see, even then, they got their priorities right and took the plants with them). It was introduced to New Zealand here in James Busby's collection in 1842 and it has been grown in Australia by C. Waterhouse in South Australia since 1862.

Chenin Blanc is a wine for all occasions and it is hard not to like it. It is versatile in style and sweetness and has the ability to adapt to a wide variety of tastes. Maison Noire's Chenin Blanc was complex, with a smokiness and minerality, followed by aromas of peach, nectarine and pink grapefruit with notes of toffee, nougat and coriander. Crunchy apple and zesty grapefruit bringing freshness to the palate with a soft buttery finish. A perfect food match with a cheese platter, Asian food, fish, poultry or simply to drink on its own. Michael Cooper and Sam Kim awarded this 4 and half stars.

SUMMER SPARKLINGS

Of course we have all the beautiful sparklings to enjoy over the Christmas season and the supermarkets have fabulous bargains, so watch out for these when next shopping. The MUMM Grand Cordon Champagne is on special at New World for \$49 and the Daniel Le Brun Methode Traditionelle Brut is \$19.99. You will also find the Lindauers range and Special Reserves are on special everywhere. Deutz Brut has a case of 6 for \$105 at Countdown. This is incredible value

BUT don't forget the gorgeous PROSECCOS. My favourite is Graeme Norton's and will be on special at most supermarkets. It is the most summery, beautiful bubbles - with a cheese platter, asparagus dripping in butter and black pepper, and then strawberries. A match made in heaven, sitting on the deck staring into space and reveling in the tastes, bubbles and relaxation. Smoked salmon..... so it goes on..... Can't wait.



DOMAINE TRELOAR

There was a recent article in the Sunday Star Times about Hamilton Kiwi and old school and swimming friend of my daughter's, Rachel Treloar who with her husband Jonathan Hesford (an Englishman) have a vineyard in the Roussillon in France. So of course I got in touch and it was great to hear all about her and Jonathan's journey to end up in the beautiful area of Roussillon, growing grapes and making fine wines.



Their journey to get there was unusual. They lived and worked in IT within 500 meters of the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001 and after witnessing that event made them re-think their lives. This provided the catalyst to make their dream a reality. They came back to NZ and Jonathan studied Oenology and winemaking at Lincoln University. He then worked as Winemaker at Neudorf Estate before going to France and buying an old 10-hectare vineyard and winery in the Roussillon area. Old, traditional stonework, the dream.

They now produce 35,000 bottles of award-winning wine on the 10 hectares and do all the work in the winery and vineyards themselves. "For us it is a labour of love to make the best wines possible at an accessible price, even if the quantities are very limited". This has been proved as Jancis Robinson MW and Britain's most respected wine critic has awarded them the best wines in the Rousillon with eight of their wines currently ranking in her top 15.

They produce many unusual wines of different varieties. Do go to their fabulous website www.domainetreloar.com and see the varieties. The website is in English and French. The labels have a distinctive New Zealand Koru on them and their iconic red is called Tahī (Maori for Number 1) and is a blend of Syrah, Grenache and Mourvèdre. They have produced a red wine called Le Ciel Vide (Empty Skies) which for them expressed most clearly their poignant memories of September 11, 2001.

As if that is not enough work, plus bringing up a family, they run Gites on their property (like cabins for accommodation) and have had many Kiwis staying there and enjoying the lifestyle and of course the wines.

Rachel is coming to see her mum in Hamilton next year and also to do some tastings at her outlets - Maison Vauron in Auckland and Wellington. She is hoping she can fit in a tasting for our wine club whilst in Hamilton so I am keeping in touch and will report back. How exciting if we can make it happen. Her husband has offered to do a, tasting for us via video, which he does to clients' in Europe so the mind boggles if we can make that happen!!! So very exciting and of course we are desperate to go to the Rousillon now.



WINESPEAK - YOU'LL NEED YOUR NOSE!

There's no sense more important than smell when it comes to tasting wine. At the top of your nose, just behind the olfactory nerve - the epicenter of smell and taste. This nerve is the communications link between what you smell and taste, and your brain. You taste berries - it tells your brain. Burn your toast and your brain will find out about it soon enough. That's why it is really important to take some time and smell what is in your glass. Take the glass by the stem and have a smell - don't swirl, just put your nose to the glass and smell. Now repeat the process, only give it a good swirl first. Make small clockwork rotations with your glass set on a



firm base. Try to build up your speed as you go. Aroma molecules are released from a wine's surface, so by swirling the glass you're increasing the surface area of the wine, which (fingers crossed) will give us more to smell. How far away you hold your glass from your nose is up to you. So here we go - a bit of a swirl followed by a big sniff. Notice the difference! Fruit aromas speak for themselves but there are many others to look out for: tobacco, spices, nuts, earth, smoke, flowers, chocolate, butter - to name a few. You can get animals, farmyard, grass, kerosene, minerals, eucalyptus - all depending on the wine you are having at the time and where it is from and the terroir.

Finally, if you can't smell anything it could be because the wine is too cold. If so place your hands around the bowl for a couple of minutes. Or- unfortunately - it may be the wine. However, keep smelling and keep swirling as many times as you like. It is amazing how over time, the aromas change and you will be able to recognise different aromas.

A FIRST FOR THE WINE CLUB



AIMEE and DANIEL, our youngest wine members, completed a FIRST for the Wine Club. They came to the last tasting on Lime scooters. What is more incredulous is they went home on the scooters, after a long tasting - and arrived safely. Aimee won the raffle so I had to take her bottle home (hee hee). Well done you two. Don't attempt it at the Christmas party, we won't know if you make it over the river! It is great to see the Club is moving forward with the latest technology available, I think. Don't try it if you are over 60.

They have just had a wine trip to Hawkes Bay - here is their report.

"We recently went on a mini wine adventure to Hawkes Bay. First day was spent driving around visiting some great wineries - Brookfields, Black Barn, Te Mata Estate and Clearview, however next day we were more adventurous. We hired bicycles from 'On Yer Bikes' and spent the day of pedal powered wine tasting. We visited Sileni Estates, Alpha Domus, Te Awa and Ash Ridge. What a way to 'do' the vines. We ended up buying two cases of wine to bring back to the Waikato. We didn't have to juggle them on our bikes - a van picks them all up and delivers to your accommodation or car! The best drops were - The Sileni Estates Cut Cane Merlot 2016 and the Brookfields Barrique Fermented Viognier 2018. What a fun weekend and no accidents."

Scooters and bikes - perhaps it might be go-karts or canoes next time to buy wine!

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND THE CELLARMASTER

A plea from the President to let David know that you are coming (OR NOT) to Wine Club the Friday night before so she can purchase enough food to satisfy us all. She usually starts on the Saturday to get stuff and would love to know how many platters are needed and how many tables to set up on Sunday. Thank you so much. Love from Grumpy.

PREPARE FOR THE HAMILTON WINE CLUB ICONIC CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Christmas party is next so I hope you know every Christmas song and carol ever written, every film ever made about Christmas and read every book ever written about Christmas. You will then have a chance in the Karen Christmas Quiz. Remember your \$10 Secret Santa present and dressing up in Christmas stuff is optional.

See you there and enjoy your summer drinking over the holidays.

Cheers

Gay Main

P.S. Clicking on an image will via a prompt open a link in your browser and take you to the original article