

# WINETALK

384

WINE CONNOISSEURS CLUB OF HAMILTON

July 2023

## Coming Functions

Jul 9	US and French Wines
Aug 13	Askerne tasting
Sept 10	Elephant Hill tasting
Oct 8	

## WINETALK JULY 2023

What an enjoyable June meeting where we contrasted Chardonnays and tasted red blends from the Club Cellar.

What a revelation it all was. The

Chardonnays varied in price from \$26 for the Askerne, Pask Declaration \$32 and the Clearview Endeavour \$157. At first the bottles were too cold on a cold day and took longer to warm up - and didn't relax till a bit later when the aromas were released.

What a difference. All beautiful Chardonnays was what we thought and all very drinkable. As they warmed up the Clearview came into its own and had the flavours of honey, creamy, smooth zesty buttery finish, oaky. Perfect. However, as most of us would not pay this much for our everyday drinking the ASKERNE was also in

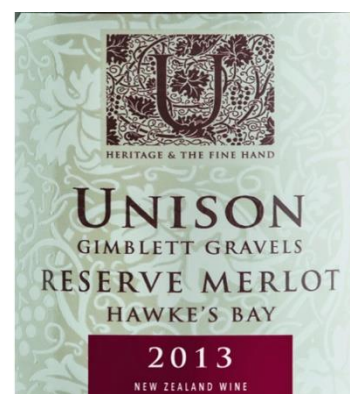
keeping with the Chardonnay attributes and flavours of a good Chardonnay. This and the Pask were excellent Chardonnays as well. So you ask yourself, is the Clearview 5 times better as the price would indicate? I think not but they were all delicious and came into their own as they became warmer. Great way to compare a wine at the club as it leads to big discussions and opinions and this is what Wine Clubs are for - to enjoy, discuss, learn and make recommendations between ourselves.

Next the reds. Well, this was a big disappointment in the Te Mata Coleraines. We bought two Coleraines (2015) for the price of \$89.95 each, 6 years later we purchased another one to make up the three for tasting and it was \$399.99 for the same Coleraine. Very disappointing flavours most of us thought. This is the second year we have been disappointed in a Coleraine tasting. I don't think the Cellarmaster will be purchasing more Coleraines. The Te Mata 2021 Awatea and the Mission Jewelstone turned out to be - also after a period of time - very smooth and well rounded. They were \$40 each and I would drink them any day.

Therefore the upshoot of all this is - prices in this case at our tasting were no indication of a better type of the grape, the deliciousness and the ability to thoroughly enjoy wine.

## VERTICAL TASTING

The UNISON 2012 Merlot vertical tasting was a huge surprise. It is getting better with age. This was bought in 2014 for \$25 and has been resting in the Club cellar since. Wow, wow, wow. It is now 13 years old and seems to be getting even better. I gave it a better report this year than last year, when I thought we should drink it within the year. How wrong I was. Usually used as a blending grape, Merlot is a Bordeaux beauty which has grown well in New Zealand again, mainly in Hawkes Bay. Full of red fruit flavours, juicy, soft tannins, cherries, plums, with notes of cloves, vanilla and herbs. I thought it was the wine of the night! Well done us to know it has and still is being cared for properly in our cellar.



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## SOUTH AFRICAN WINE TASTING

My 'other group' recently held a South African wine tasting. It was surprising how drinkable they all were. South African wine went into decline over the apartheid years with many people giving up drinking them in protest over apartheid. Now their wines are world class with Stellenbosch being the premier area for South African wines. The wines tasted were:

**SECATEURS 2021 Chenin Blanc** from Western Cape. This was fresh, a touch of spice and green apple. Very delicious and different to our New Zealand Chenin Blancs. \$25 from Hamilton Beer and Wine.

**THELEMA 2021 Meerlust Chardonnay** from Stellenbosch. Stunning, buttery, apricot, complex, vivacious. Great Chardonnay. \$50 Fine Wine Delivery.

**THELEMA 2018 Chardonnay** from Stellenbosch. Loved this year from Thelema. Peach, citrus, toasty. \$38 from Hamilton Beer and Wine. Another stunning Chardonnay.

**WARWICK ESTATE, THE FIRST LADY 2020 Pinotage**, Western Cape. Pinotage is very popular in South Africa. Loved it. Full of chocolate and cherry flavours. Colour outstanding. \$25 from Cambridge Wine shop.

All together a beautiful set of wines and makes me want to explore South African wines further. They are coming into their own and are now the 8th largest producer of wines in the world. Try some.

## PINOTAGE - WINE OF SOUTH AFRICA

After tasting the South African Pinotage thought I would check out the grape. The club used to have access to New Zealand Pinotage from Houchens Road Winery in Pokeno. We had them at the Club a couple of times and they also had an Open Day each November. The vineyard is gone, replaced by a Milk Factory and houses. A shame as they produced great wines, Pinotage among them.

Pinotage is the signature variety of South African wines. A local cross between Pinot Noir and Cinsault, it was created in 1925 in South Africa by a Professor of Science. It combines the noble characteristics of Pinot Noir with the reliability of Cinsault, a French grape popular in Languedoc-Roussillon region, used for blending mainly. It is dense in colour and bold in flavours. Plum, tobacco, blackberry and licorice flavours can be detected and occasionally in some Pinotage you can taste red fruit flavours like raspberry and red bell pepper. It is becoming more popular around the

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world so I say give Pinotage a try. You won't be disappointed and they are readily available. In fact it is gaining in popularity around the world.



**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR WINE TOUR TO HAWKES BAY**



We are thinking of doing a wine trail to Hawkes Bay the weekend after Labour weekend. David has been down 'looking around' and talking to the I-site people in Napier. We intend to travel there by our own means of transport and car sharing on the Thursday, have the tour on Friday and Saturday, and back Sunday. Please let David know if you are interested and we can go ahead with bookings. We would require a deposit initially. More about trip later when we know numbers.

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## VILAGRADS TASTING, TOUR AND LUNCH 16th SEPTEMBER

Don't forget to mark your calendar for the Vilagrad Saturday tasting and lunch. Pay \$75 into our bank account so we can get numbers together. We will have to know the numbers by 30th August.

## SUBS DUE

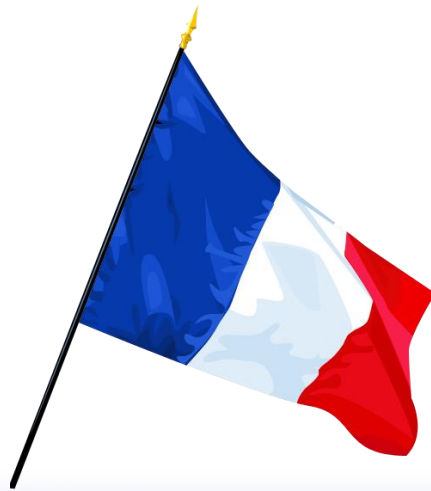
Just a reminder to members who still owe their \$30 sub to pay this into the Club account. This will take you up to May 2024 and all the exciting events we have planned for you!

## JULY TASTING - VIVE LA FRANCE!

Who better to present French wines than our own French wine lover and Club member Maxime Savoie. Max will present French wines in conjunction with the Hamilton Beer and Wine Company. Berets are optional - I am brushing off mine - so help celebrate La Fête Nationale at the next meeting.

See you there.....

Cheers,  
*Gay Main*



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