

WINETALK

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WINE CONNOISSEURS CLUB OF HAMILTON

June 2022

Coming Functions

Jun 12	Junction Wines
Jul 10	"Mike's" Syrah Tasting
Aug 14	Stonecroft Wines
Sept 14	
Oct 9	Johanneshof (delayed from 2021)

WINETALK JUNE 2022

AGM 2022 - WE ARE IN GOOD HEART

Well as expected, a short AGM with all reports presented and accepted showing the Club to be in an excellent position both financially and in membership. Then of course an Options tasting and brain busting quiz from the Cellarmaster, entailing a lot of heavy thinking, discussion, arguments and laughter at the AGM. It was a lot of fun and some cellar wines were tasted. Here is the list of the wines we tasted at AGM 2022.

1: Hawkes Ridge, Rosada; 2: Maison Noire, Arneis; 3: Johanneshof, Sauvignon Blanc; 4: Askerne, Cabernet Franc; 5: Brookfield, Malbec; 6: Hawkes Ridge, Reserve Tempranillo.

IT'S GETTING CHILLY - TIME FOR THE REDS TO EMERGE

As soon as there is a bit of a nip in the air your taste buds turn to a red wine but..... still keep the whites around. To set off the autumn, a Malbec tasting I attended recently, proved this is one of my favourite red wines. Because Malbec is grown worldwide, although a French Bordelaise grape, the wines we tasted were from four different countries, all delicious and very drinkable and all with classic Malbec characteristics. Spicy dark fruit flavours, paired with Gouda cheese and a soft blue cheese as well as red meats (think marbled melt in the mouth Argentinian steak). The wines tasted were:

NEW ZEALAND: [Brookfield Hawkes Bay](#), 2020 Malbec. Wow. Fruity, rich delicious long taste. This was a complete surprise, thinking that the best come from Mendoza in Argentina or France. What a surprise. Gorgeous

FRANCE: [Chateau de Cedre](#), 2018 Cahors, France. This was DIVINE. Beautiful colour. Most at the tasting said it was like silk going down your throat, smooth and from the home of the Malbec grape, WOW.

ARGENTINA: [Casarena 505](#), 2020 Mendoza. Grapes grown high in the Eastern Andes: Elegant, fruit forward, violet red colour. Intense nose, soft round tannins, long persistent finish. Paired with an Argentinian steak on the Pampas.....

PERU: [Vittoria 2018](#). The other side of the Andes. Different, still beautiful Malbec characteristics, but more salty and tannic. Still a delicious BBQ wine we decided, out on the deck with this Malbec in hand.

Have been trying a few reds ever since the tasting - Come winter and we can hit the bigger, bold reds. Winter is not all bad.



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JUST DRINK IT

Bob Campbell MOW reports in [The Real Review](#) and asks: ARE YOU A HEDONIST OR A HOARDER?

Bob regards himself as a hedonist rather than a hoarder. A hoarder can't bring themselves to open their treasured bottles of wine, while a hedonist can't resist opening them..... HOWEVER...

"I store my more precious wines in two large temperature-controlled cabinets. I recently went to add another bottle, but both cabinets were full. I shuffled the bottles around to no avail. Clearly, I needed to sort through my



best bottles to make room for more purchases. Confession time - I don't keep a record of wines in my cellar. I have no idea what wines are in those cabinets. TIME FOR A STOCKTAKE OR SHOCKTAKE.

By my guess 25% of the wines in my cellar were well past their use-by date - anyone want a 2004 Gisborne Sauvignon Blanc? Really?????????

Hullo, my name is Bob and I am a hoarder.

However, don't do as I do but do as I say. If you have more than a couple of dozen bottles, download free software from *CellarTracker*, or use an Excel spreadsheet to

keep track of your precious bottles. Don't let them go past your best-by estimate. In case of fire or burglary, you will also have the records for your insurance company. Or else my best advice, being a hedonist, is JUST DRINK IT."

FYI - [CellarTracker](#) is indeed free in the basic format but asks for a purely voluntary payment for additional features. The minimum payment is \$US20 however the suggested payment for 0-99 bottles per year is \$US40

WHAT IS BRIX?

Ever wondered what the word Brix means in winemaking? The term Brix is the name of the system for measuring sugar content in grapes for the potential alcohol content of a wine, fermenting grape juice (musts) or finished wine. Developed by German Mathematician, Adolph Brix, in the early 1800s, Brix is credited with adding precision to the measurement of sugar content on a density scale known as Balling. Grape sugars have a direct impact on the alcohol levels of wine and the resulting sense of body in the taste. Potential alcohol by volume (PAV) is typically calculated by multiplying Brix readings by .55 however can be as high as .64 for different types of grapes that are known for uneven ripening, or depending on what type of wine the winemaker wishes to produce.

Grapes picked at 22 Brix can be expected to finish from 12.1% - 14.8%. Different Brix readings produce different alcohol levels. Brix is measured using a refractometer or a hydrometer, depending on the stage of fermentation. In the vineyard Brix levels are collected right before harvest to determine whether the grapes are ready to be picked. In the winery, Brix levels are collected again after the grapes have been pressed to analyse the final sugar content and the potential alcohol level of the wine. Look on the back label of the wine bottle you are drinking at the moment and you will see the alcohol volume. I am in the throes of drinking a Georges Road, Waipara 2018 Pinot Noir and the alcohol volume is 13.5%. The bloke I live with is drinking a Deep River 2017 Shiraz from McLaren Vale and the alcohol content is 14%. It's all about the Brix.

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WINESPEAK

VITICULTURE: The practice of growing grapes and vineyard management.

OENOLOGY: The study of wine and Winemaking.

VINIFICATION: The practice of Winemaking.

VINTAGE: The year the grapes used in a wine were grown and harvested.

JUNE TASTING - JUNCTION WINES..... FROM RUGBY FIELD TO VINEYARD

This month we are hosting Junction Wines from Hawkes Bay. One of Hawkes Bay's most southern vineyards, about 90 kms south of Napier - just past the settlement of Takapau on SH2, it is owned by ex-All Black John Ashworth and wife Jo, with oldest son Leith the winemaker in their family vineyard.

John played 52 games for the All Blacks and was more for a beer than a wine until a tour of France with the All Blacks introduced him to a Pinot Noir. They had been tasting big red wines which his palate struggled with. Then a fellow player introduced him to a Pinot Noir which as he says blew his socks off. "It went right down to my toes and I have never forgotten that moment. I am still passionate about Pinot Noir - I am sure they drink it in heaven ...and they probably play rugby there as well," he said.



After his rugby life he bought land in Hawkes Bay for farming but the passion for that Pinot Noir never waned and with the encouragement of his family he started experimenting with grapes instead. Thank goodness for that I say, if you have tasted some of his award-winning wines.

Wife Jo works alongside her husband in educating visitors and showing them the impressive rugby memorabilia collection and looking after the rustic cellar door with winemaker son Leith who trained in Viticulture and Oenology at Lincoln University. Leith has won 13 Gold, Silver and Bronze medals for his wines and the boutique vineyard now has, besides Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris, Chardonnay, Rose, Riesling, and Syrah but the big love is still that Pinot Noir. Leith now also has his own vineyard in Hawkes Bay, Ash Ridge Wines, who we hope to have some time at the Club.

It should be a great night to remember. John and Jo are presenting and the stories of winemaking and John's All Black career will be endless.

See you there.

Cheers,
Gay Main

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