

WINETALK

374

WINE CONNOISSEURS CLUB OF HAMILTON

September 2022

Coming Functions

Sept 11	Viognier & Cellar reds.....
Oct 9	Johanneshof (delayed from 2021)
Nov 13	Petane Station & Wairiki
Dec 3	Xmas party (Note the date !)
Jan 8	Jan BBQ (date to be confirmed)

WINETALK SEPTEMBER 2022

STONECROFT TASTING

Stonecroft visited last month bringing some quality wines with them. Thought the Gerwurtz was outstanding, full of passionfruit, hint of rose

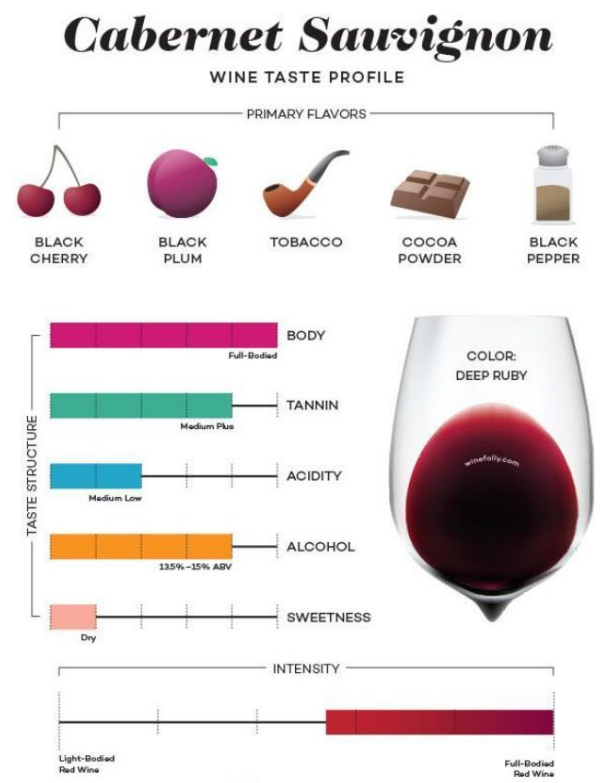
and tropical fruit notes. Just how I like my Gerwurtz - aromatic and Christmas Cakey. (New wine term invented by moi). The outstanding Ruhanui 2020 blend of Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. Matured for over 18 months in French Oak, the tannins soft and smooth.

CABERNET SAUVIGNON

Celebrating Cabernet Sauvignon Day in late August makes you think of this glorious grape. As we are just about into Spring, and perhaps having a wee look at lighter wines, had to check out a few Cab Sav's before we get all spring and summery. It is the most popular and versatile grape around, producing gorgeous wines. Late budding and mid-late ripening, Cabernet Sauvignon is a thick-skinned grape that thrives in warmer climates. It is considered one of the "Noble" grape varieties grown throughout the world for their versatility and commercial recognition.

Cabernet Sauvignon was first mentioned in the late 1700's from around the Gironde in south-west France. The origin of its name has been the subject of much debate. Frequently mistaken for Cabernet Franc and the similarities its leaves share with Sauvignon Blanc it was not believed that Cabernet Sauvignon was the offspring of these grapes. However, in 1994 DNA testing in California shocked the wine world with revealing that Cabernet Sauvignon is indeed the offspring of Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon Blanc.

It is virtually impossible to avoid Cabernet Sauvignon given its popularity among grape growers, winemakers, retailers and sommeliers. The wine expresses itself in unique ways depending on where it is grown. Cabernet Sauvignons run the gamut from ripe and powerful to more herbal and savoury, depending on which one you taste. It has long been valued for its ability to add structure to wine blends, usually associated with Barossa reds, giving them greater potential to age. It is the dominant grape on the left bank, home to all five of Bordeaux's premier Grand Cru wineries. Some of the greatest wines in the world are made from blends built on a foundation of Cabernet Sauvignon.



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It is excellent food pairing. Its higher levels of tannins and its ability to express oak aging makes it a perfect accompaniment to meat: from grilled beef steak to lamb chops, savoury stir fries and roasted duck. Works with cheeses, hard cheese especially and of course with chocolate in any way shape or form. Cabernet is best enjoyed in a large wine glass and at slightly cooler than room temperature.

Henry at PRIMO VINO (opp. Founders Theatre) loves Cabernet Sauvignon and gives a few thoughts on Cab Sav and two favourites:

One of the things about New Zealand Cabernet Sauvignon is there are very few straight Cab Sav's from New Zealand. It is simply too cool here to get a consistent ripening. In New Zealand it is most often blended with other Bordeaux varieties and when we see Cabernet on a bottle is usually means Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc blend. Here are two super Australian examples - both very different. The top one is a classic. Its region known for intensity and elegance. The second is more in the Australian style, bold and powerful. Without spending a fortune, they are a great introduction to the variety.



RINGBOLT Margaret River 2021 Cabernet Sauvignon. New release and already 93 points. This wine consistently combines elegance with power - a hallmark of Margaret River Cabernet. 93/100 James Suckling American Wine critic. He said: "This is very floral with lots of violets together with such attractive blueberries, blackcurrants, cherries, terra cotta and fresh herbs. The palate is very intense with rich, fine tannins that have supple texture and bright taut red and dark berry flavours. Tasty oak edge to the finish." Elsewhere \$27.99.....Primo Vino price: \$19.99.

THE WILLOW Barossa 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon. It's bold, it's big and it is so well balanced. Distinctive Eucalyptus and mint characters and a delicious complexity to the rich chocolate hints usually associated with Barossa reds. Elsewhere \$39.99.....Primo Vino price: \$31.99.

THE WAIRARAPA WINE REGION

Wairarapa (the Māori word for glistening waters) is sometimes forgotten by many as a major wine region of New Zealand. The Wine Club visited there about ten years ago and we were amazed by the many vineyards in the various sub-regions and the beautiful wines produced. It is a relatively young region, with their modern plantings dating from the 1970's but has seen a steep increase in wine production in the last 25 years.

Winestyles and planting information

Pinot Noir

The region's flagship red; richly flavoured and warm with a savoury undercurrent whilst retaining perfumed varietal character, Wairarapa Pinots offer texture and depth.

Sauvignon Blanc

The region's best-kept secret. Intense and vivid with excellent perfume and poised, mineral textural palates. Good mix of herbaceous and tropical characters.

Pinot Gris

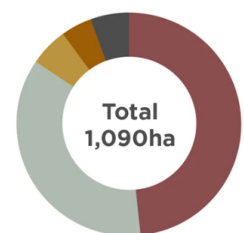
Pinot Gris is successful with the long growing season also allowing for late harvest and botrytised styles.

Syrah

Emerging and showing great promise. Elegant, perfumed with a backbone of spice, Syrah looks to replacing the climatically trickier Cabernet and Merlot blends.

Aromatics

Riesling and Gewürztraminer are successful with the long growing season, also allowing for late harvest and botrytised styles. Stylish Viognier also impresses.



PINOT NOIR 527ha
SAUVIGNON BLANC 62ha
CHARDONNAY 62ha
PINOT GRIS 47ha
OTHER 60ha

Because of its proximity to our capital city, it is often referred to as the Wellington Wine Region. As it is only an hour's drive from Wellington, a large tourist industry has sprung up around the wine trails. The climate is similar to the Burgundy region of France. Wairarapa region has the perfect location for winemaking thanks to the climate - cold winters and hot summers and the shelter provided by the surrounding hills and the Tararua Ranges. It has three

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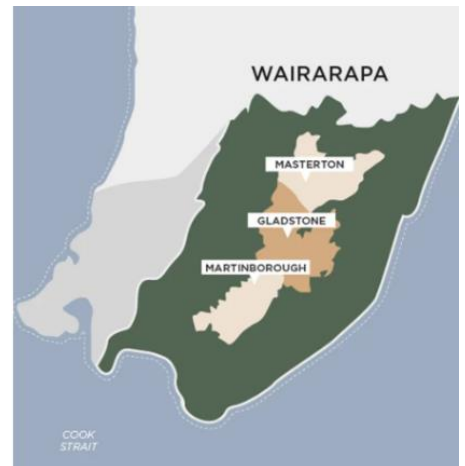
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sub-regions, Martinborough, Gladstone and Masterton. Across these sub- regions some of New Zealand's most premium Pinot Noir, Syrah, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Aromatics and Dessert wines are produced. They all share a similar climate and soils but also offer subtle differences.

MASTERTON: Early morning frosts are common with incredibly hot summers. They produce complex and flavourful wines with Pinot Noir and Sauvignon Blanc being the dominant varieties.

GLADSTONE: Has free draining river terraces and a cooler climate with plenty of sunshine. Clay amongst the stony silt suits the predominantly Pinot Noir and Aromatics.

MARTINBOROUGH: Most southerly sub- region. This picturesque colonial village is surrounded by small vineyards, mainly family owned. Acclaimed area for Pinot Noir, vivid Sauvignon Blanc and Syrah along with Chardonnay and aromatics, this area has excited the wine world. Boasts free draining soils and a cool dry climate.



Some of New Zealand's finest wineries are here. Names like: Dry River, Ata Rangī, Margrain, Johnner and Palliser Estate. Stone Cutter, Pencarrow and many others all in wonderful Wairarapa.

BUS TRIP TO VOLCANIC HILLS WINERY ROTORUA AND BLUEBERRY FARM MAMAKU

All confirmed for Saturday 17th September. Will let you all know the extra money to be paid. We have 14 paid their \$100 deposit at moment but with the last calls notice sent out will probably reach 20 with a maximum of 25. Account for payments is 03 0306 0208963 026

So very exciting and should be a great day with lovely wines to taste, good food to eat and good company. More at the meeting on 11th September with times etc.

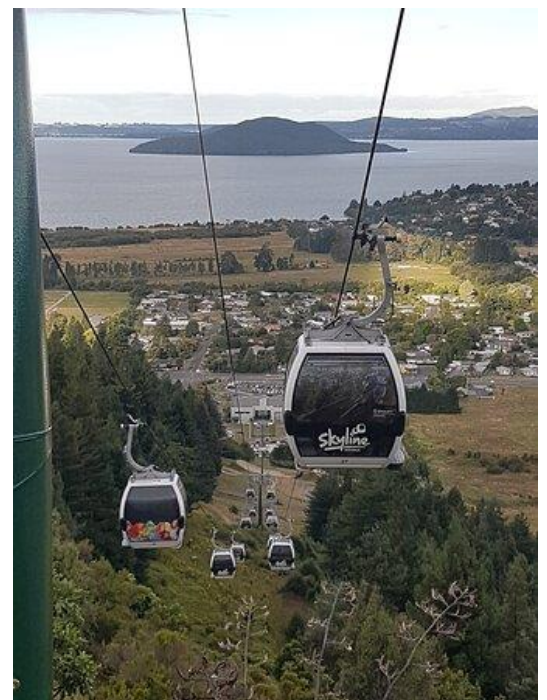
We will be able to leave our cars for the day at Leisure Time Tours. They are in Greenlea Place off Kahikatea Drive. Turn into there and do a sharp left turn to go past the shops and at the end is the big yard and office of Leisure Time Tours. You can't miss the buses parked there. We hope to be away by 9.00am - wee bit earlier to allow for traffic as we want to be at Volcanic Hills by 10.45 for tasting.

Should be home by 4.45. Looking forward to our first tour in 2 years!!!

Also, by the way, The Mamaku Blue Blueberry Farm are going to give us free tastings of their Blueberry Wine and their three Liqueurs which will be for sale! They have a lot of interesting products for sale in their shop including, juices, chutneys, cakes etc.

If you want, there is also coffee in their café (your purchase).

So should be an even happier group on the way back!!



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A EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE

6 July, we left NZ for England, arriving at Manchester airport at 8.45 am, 7 July approximately 1 hour late and minus 1 item of luggage - a carton with 6 wine bottles and 4 Whittaker chocolate bars for family (this unfortunately never turned up). However, our 2 ½ weeks in England were superb despite the unpromising start. As well as visiting family we also enjoyed a 3-day sojourn at Saltburn on Sea, visits to Staithes, Robin Hoods Bay, Runswick Bay and Whitby, all located on the east Yorkshire coast. As you will all be aware, England is renowned for its wonderful pubs so naturally we felt obliged to sample their wares at regular intervals, especially with temperatures of 25-36C throughout our stay. Although we did enjoy a couple of very nice Riojas our tasting focus was more on the beers, in particular IPAs (Indian Pale Ale). Recommendations include: Lansdown IPA, Snake IPA (with very snazzy, coloured skulls and bones on the glass) and an American Shipyard IPA.

24 July we departed Manchester arriving in Bucharest Romania approximately 2.30am (again 1 hour late). Our river cruise which was scheduled to start 26 July was delayed by 1 day due to both low water levels on the Danube and also the war with Ukraine preventing both the planned visit to the Danube delta at the Black Sea and the embarkation at Rousse. Instead we had a visit to the Murfatlar winery on our way back from Constanta where we enjoyed a tasting of 5 wines as well as lunch with a folklore show. The Murfatlar winery is one of the oldest wineries in Romania – Muscatel (sweet but went well with the baked cheesecake), French style Sauv Blanc (tasted better when paired with blue cheese), Merlot Rose (very dry), Cab Franc (popular with several others at the table) and my favourite was the 8yr old Feteasca Neagra (\$36 NZ).

We embarked on the cruise the next afternoon at Turnu Magurele, Romania at the confluence of the Olt River and the Danube. Most days were spent visiting fortresses (who knew that all the countries from Romania to Hungary had been invaded many times by the Byzantine Empire, Ottoman Empire, Austro-Hungarian Empire as well as more local skirmishes plus of course the 2 World Wars) and churches – the Christian Orthodox church was the primary religion apart from pockets where the Ottoman Empire had destroyed churches to build mosques).

However, to provide some light relief to all that history, we also visited 2 further wineries for tastings:

- Iloki Podrum winery, Croatia where we tasted a Grasevina (Riesling), Gewurztraminer (they make 8 different styles of Gewurzt wine) and a Kapistran CRNI (light red, 70% Blue Frankish & 30% Merlot).
- Museum of Beekeeping and the Zivanovic winery, which was known for its Bepmet wine (both red and white versions with mountain herbs added (I preferred the red version which was sweetish, 16% alcohol, supposedly good for one's health and an aphrodisiac). We also tasted 2 wines made with the Probus grape (local grape variety from crossing Cab Sauv with Kardaka grape) – red and a rose and a Chardonnay.

The cruise was superb with wonderful food, wine, staff and service. We tried some wonderful wines on the boat, too many to mention (or remember!). We flew home to rainy Hamilton on 7 August, minus my suitcase which finally turned up 2 ½ weeks later (fortunately my 3 bottles of wine arrived unscathed).

[Judy Fitness](#)

NEXT MEETING SUNDAY 11th SEPTEMBER

Our next meeting is a presentation of wines from our cellar. Karen and Aimee will be presenting wines from the cellar. We have several lovely Viogniers to taste and also a stunning Pinot Noir, a Malbec AND also the Unison Merlot which is a structured and recorded tasting. Wow.

See you there,
Cheers,

[Gay Main](#)

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