

WINETALK

412

WINE CONNOISSEURS CLUB OF HAMILTON
Since 1965

February 2026

Coming Functions

| | |
|--------|---------------------------|
| Feb 8 | Askerne Wines |
| Mar 8 | 'Karens' Bubbles tasting |
| Apr 12 | Brockenchack Wines (AU) |
| May 10 | AGM |
| Jun 14 | Bushmere Wines |



WINETALK February 2026

Well, here we are again - a new year, new and familiar wineries and more great events and tastings planned - so Happy New Year and let's look forward to the year ahead.

We have an interesting line-up of wineries and tastings from our Wine Club cellar, from several wine-growing regions of New Zealand and for the first time an Australian Winery is visiting. Start studying now for "David's Annual Damned Hard Quiz" in May in conjunction with the AGM.

We kick off the year with our friend John Loughlin of Askerne Estate winery in Hawkes Bay. He is an old friend of the club, having visited and presented in the past and also hosted us on our Hawkes Bay Wine Tours, so look forward to this visit and his delicious wines.

And we can't go through the summer without the annual Cellarmaster Karen Nixey's "Bubbles from around the World" Presentation in March. Karen will also be presenting Cellar Wines in winter to warm our hearts with some hearty reds from the cellar.

We also have Brockenchack Wines from Australia in April and Gisborne, Hawkes Bay, Northland and Marlborough wineries presenting in the year. So, what an exciting year to look forward to!

THE BEST OF SUMMER DRINKING

Of course, you all will have found some new, favourite wines over this hot summer so here are my favourites tried and tested with friends and family over the holiday period.

Drank a lot of bubbles of course, the favourite being the [JK14 PROSECCO](#) from the DOC Treviso Region of Italy. Fresh, dry, aromatic, lively, authentic and absolutely delicious. Like a fresh breeze on a hot sunny day.



[GREYSTONE RIESLING 2019](#). Waipara Valley, North Canterbury. Beautifully balanced with bright acidity. Tasting of stone fruit, lime and as smooth as honey. Grapes were from the Limestone soils giving a soft minerality. Long finish. A Gold Medal wine 6 years old and still improving. Gorgeous example of how a Riesling should be. So delicious didn't wish to share!

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Visiting family in Australia, a friend's son-in-law gave her a bottle of this Australian Rosé to bring back to New Zealand and share with friends! So she did!

It was a [FARR RISING SAIGNEE 2024 ROSÉ](#), Bannockburn, Victoria, Australia. Pinot Noir Grapes. Dry style with varietal sweetness. Pale salmon pink in colour. Earthy, savoury with long dry finish. An absolute beauty from Australia. Best Rosé I have tasted in a long time as not my favourite drink. We are sending her back for more!



Best Chardonnay of the summer was another find by a friend (and club member) as she browsed the wine aisles at Woolworths. It was a [CHURCH ROAD, MACDONALD SERIES, CHARDONNAY, 2024](#), Hawkes Bay, Tuketuki Region. Just beautiful. Subtle Oak, citrus, stone fruit. Creamy. Full bodied. An absolute pleasure to drink. And would you believe on special for \$15. What a buy. Of course, went back to stock up and all gone, so Chardonnay drinkers keep a look out for it on special.

Of course, lots of JK14 Italian GIN PRIMO from Romagna was consumed with ice and tonic water. Loved the minerality and botanicals in this gorgeous hot summer's day drink.

If you have made any astounding discoveries in your drinks over the summer let me know and I will publish in next WineTalk.

SAUVIGNON BLANC – NEW ZEALAND'S LIQUID GOLD



Almost certainly named after "sauvage", the French word for wild, the grape originated in Bordeaux and initially gained recognition as an integral part of the world-famous white Bordeaux wines.

The variety then travelled to New Zealand where in 1969, Kiwi winemaker Ross Spence (of Matua) planted the first vines in Waimauku, West Auckland. Marlborough got into the picture in 1973, and New Zealand quickly rose to worldwide wine glory with its punchy, zesty, never-before-seen Sauvignon Blanc style.



Like any wine, Sauvignon Blanc takes on different aromas, flavours and qualities depending on the climate of the growing area, the desires of the given winemaker and the particular techniques of the winery and those used from harvesting through to bottling.



Nationally, over 25,000 hectares of vineyard land is devoted to growing the grape. It is New Zealand's most widely planted variety and has established itself as our Flagship wine, the world over. Three-quarters of all Sauvignon Blanc planted is in Marlborough (22,000k+ ha) followed by Hawkes Bay (1k+ha) and Nelson (0.6ha).

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Sauvignon Blanc is the cornerstone of New Zealand's wine industry. It comprises 72% of New Zealand's overall wine production and 86% of what we export to the rest of the world. Total production is 302,000 tons, totalling NZ\$2.1 billion in 2024.

Love it or hate it, it is our Wine Gold. Its zesty flavours and aromas, with styles ranging from light and fruity to tropical citrus and gooseberry flavours with characters of grassy notes and minerality and lip-smacking salinity, it is our liquid gold in demand worldwide.

It is an excellent food pairing wine. With Sauvignon Blanc, you can roll out everything from fresh seafood to Thai food to chicken dishes, salads and pastas.



NEXT MEETING : Sunday FEBRUARY 8th - ASKERNE WINE ESTATE, HAWKES BAY.



Please, it is essential you let David know if you are coming OR NOT by the Friday before. We need to know exact numbers for the food preparation, the number of tables to be set and also to let the visiting winemaker know how many are expected - not having sufficient wine would be such a **DISASTER !**

Look forward to seeing you and tasting delicious Askerne wines.

Cheers,

Gay Main

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