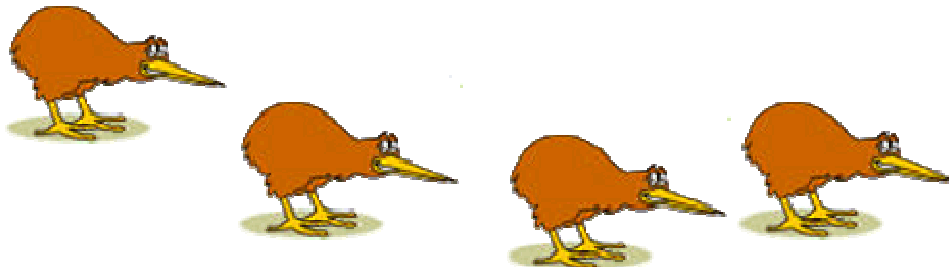


## June 2011 - Focus on New Zealand



### To be on the Kiwi-vive

"If it would not look too much like showing off, I would tell the reader where New Zealand is." .....

*Mark Twain 1897*

I was going to do the customary country wine profile: x million litres of Sauvignon, two billion tonnes of sheep manure, but dry statistics don't do justice.

We've had a love affair with New Zealand ever since we first visited but our buying there has been cack-handed or sweetly naive. Take your pick. On his first trip Eric drove the old jalopy from north to south usually ending up in wine producing regions in the middle of the night or often, arriving in the back end of nowhere, miles from the nearest orc colony, he would have to kip out on a beach. He returned with a great list of names, virtually none of whom we ever shipped, but like the recording angel I am I dutifully inscribed on our anaemic new world list. This virtual list was terrific, the ultimate promissory note that never delivered the goods. Chard Farm, Peregrine, Borthwick, Muirlea, Margrain never came and duly never went, others such as Dusky Sound, Murdoch James, Te Awa, Danny Schuster and Mount Maude did arrive and took up temporary residence on our list, but, for various reasons, drizzled away like the long white cloud that hangs over the southern Alps.

When asked his opinion of New Zealand: "I find it hard to say, because when I was there it seemed to be shut." .....

*Sir Clement Freud 1978*

A couple of years later I accompanied Eric for a figure-8 scenery-whistling journey between the islands. As per his previous trip we often fetched up in nowheresville twixt two wine producing regions, usually a shack proclaiming that it was the green-lipped mussel capital of the world. Well, they were welcome to them. We measured our journey in road-skill. "25 possums to the next winery", was the invariable length of journey. We figured out we were always somewhere between the end of the line and the middle of nowhere.

Two subsequent trips have solidified what we believe to a good representation of wineries and given us a reasonable insight into the state of New Zealand wine.

The journey begins in Central Otago, in the south of the south. This region is to Pinot Noir what Yukon was to gold prospecting in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. If Marlborough country was for Sauvignon and cowboys advertising cigarettes in a manly way, so Central with its glacial soils and amazing light became the lodestone for Pinot junkies who hitched their wagons with alacrity to the world's sulkiest grape variety. There's liquid gold in them there rocks. Wineries such as Felton Road, Mount Difficulty, Gibbston and Rippon blazed the trail, and dozens of others were to follow, but, greedy for bubble reputation and instant return, made pretentious, oaky, green yet extractive wines, failing to capture the haunting spirit of the grape or the terroir of the region.

## Burn Cottage, Central Otago



Burn Cottage is located in the foothills of the Pisa mountain range in Central Otago, New Zealand. The town of Cromwell is around 2 km away (6 possums) and Queenstown is one hour's drive. The climate of Central Otago can be best described as 'continental' with warm summers and cold winters. Average annual rainfall is less than 300mm (12 inches) and makes irrigation almost a necessity. The region also receives plenty of sunshine with particularly long warm days through the growing season and cool nights that help achieve ripeness while retaining good acidity. The quality of the light is extraordinary bouncing off the rocks. If scenery alone could make wine then this would be one of the premier wine-making regions of the world.

Enter Marquis Sauvage, an American wine importer with Maverick in Chicago and Classic Wines in Denver. Marquis was born in 1967 on a large Kansas cattle farm. He got into wine at graduate school, gaining an MBA at the University of Denver. During a holiday in New Zealand while on his way to Australia on business, he flew over the piece of land previously used for sheep grazing about a mile from Felton Road in Otago that he eventually turned into Burn Cottage.

Biodynamic techniques were used from the very start in 2002 on both the farm and the vineyard, a policy was advised and supervised by Ted Lemon, who, in the 1990's after years of experience of conventional farming in California, Oregon and Burgundy, had become convinced that conventional western agronomic theory was insufficient to explain plant growth, health and reproductive capacity. Ted had already turned to biodynamic farming in his own Sonoma vineyard – Littorai. However, no-one previously in the region had attempted to create a vineyard from bare land (from scratch as it were) using purely biodynamic methods. Many said it was impossible to do so. But

Marquis had assembled a dream team to bring his vision to fruition.

First came the farm. 17 hectares of land are devoted to creating an enclosed farm system. Highland cattle are kept to provide integrated grazing of pastures and to supply manure for the farm's and vineyard's compost programmes. (Marquis confesses that he is surprised to find himself owning cattle in Central Otago so many years after leaving the family farm in Kansas). As well as cattle there are sheep, chickens and bees, and, in addition to the vines, an olive grove has been planted in order to produce olive oil in the future. The team at Burn Cottage vineyard considers biodiversity to be the cornerstone of healthy farming, and created a suitably diverse environment for fauna and flora, restoring, for example, native habitats by planting plants and bushes and trees that are native species of New Zealand.

For a detailed description of the biodynamic techniques used at Burn Cottage read Monty Waldin's excellent monograph on Jancis Robinson's Purple Pages.

<http://www.jancisrobinson.com/articles/a201105304.html>



The eight Pinot Noir blocks were planted in 2003 on a mixture of north-east-facing and north-facing slopes of sandy loam, sandy gravels and loess. The site was much coveted by several other potential purchasers in the region at the same time that the Sauvages purchased it; because, sheltered from both northerly and southerly winds by large hills it forms a beautiful, protected bowl, much like a modern amphitheatre.

For clonal nerds the vineyard comprises 23% Abel ('Ata Rangī') clone, 15% each clones 777, 667 and 155, 10% clone 114, 8% clone 10/5, 7% clone UCD5, 5% clone 828 and 1% each of clone MV6 and clone 943; mix of rootstocks including 20-25% each 3309C, 101/14, Schwarzmann and Riparia, plus 7% 420A.

The fruit is hand selected in the vineyard and then is sorted in the winery over a custom built sorting table. Most fruit is de-stemmed, however there is a small percentage of whole clusters. The alcoholic fermentation takes place in a mixture of open-top stainless steel tanks or open top French oak cives.

Fruit from each block is fermented and aged separately as the vineyard's aim is to gain an in-depth understanding of each part of this new vineyard. During vineyard development the greatest care was taken to separate blocks according to soil, aspect and exposure differences. Clones and rootstocks were chosen with the philosophy that the more diversity each block had, the more complexity the resulting wines would display). During the fermentation daily punch-downs/plunges were all manual and up to 4 times per day. The wine spends twelve months in barrel 38% of the wine is aged in new 228-litre French oak barrels (from Tonnellerie Mercurey, François Frères, Damy. 21% of the wine is aged in stainless steel tanks.

The Burn Cottage Pinot is bottled unfiltered and unfinned.

The debut vintage from Burn Cottage Vineyard has great aromatic volume and complexity but requires a few moments in the glass to blossom: plums, morello cherry, Asian spices, orange peel and hops and just a hint of the Otago wild thyme aromatic that seasons many a Pinot. The percentage of whole clusters add a fresh, earthy dimension to the wine. This is a dense, chewy and complex Pinot Noir which is made in an age-worthy (vin de garde) style. The tannins are well integrated in the palate but substantial enough that the wine is only hinting at what one can expect it to become. The acidity is bright and 100% natural lending both liveliness and authority to the long finish on the wine.

#### 2009 BURN COTTAGE PINOT NOIR



## Pyramid Valley, North Canterbury

Mike and Claudia Weersing came to New Zealand in 1996, when Mike began making wine with Tim and Judy Finn at Neudorf Vineyards in Nelson. After a long and intensive search to find a site for their own vineyard, they purchased a farm in the Pyramid Valley, near Waikari in North Canterbury, in 2000. Claudia is a committed biodynamicist and she guides the vineyard activities whilst Mike studied oenology and viticulture in Burgundy, beginning at the Lycée Viticole in Beaune, and continuing at the Université de Bourgogne in Dijon. He has worked extensively in the vineyards and cellars of Europe, for producers such as Hubert de Montille, Domaine de la Pousse d'Or, and Nicolas Potel in Burgundy; Jean-Michel Deiss and Marc Kreydenweiss in Alsace; and Ernst Loosen in the Mosel and many, many others.

The search for the “right” terroir has been rigorous- marginal climate, clay-limestone soils, scarp slopes, eastern to northern aspect, etc. - finding their way home has been a ranging, rich and fascinating migration.

Mike and Claudia have developed four vineyards over the last nine years, two of Pinot Noir, and two of Chardonnay. Their unusual shapes and differing sizes have been determined by describing, and then adhering to, discrete areas of homogenous soil and aspect. Each block is vinified and bottled separately, as an expression of its specific place. The vineyard names are derived from common names of predominant weed species in each block. As soil conditions change, the weed mix responds accordingly. They have managed these vineyards biodynamically from the very beginning, doing so by hand for the first two tractor-less years.

This is a labour of love and of perfection: plant density is the highest in New Zealand, yields austere, and the vineyard environment - embracing soils and plants and animals and insects and above all, people - is lavished with care.

“Wine to us is a genie, genius loci; our task is to coax it from its stone bottle. Wine's magical capacity for evoking site, we consider an obligation, as much as a gift. Every gesture we make, in the vineyard and winery, is a summons to the spirit of place. Biodynamics, hand-based viticulture, natural winemaking - these are all means we've adopted better to record and to transmit, with the greatest possible fidelity, this spirit's song.”

Field of Fire Chardonnay (the name derives from a weed called twitch) pitches in at a mere 1.7 tonnes/acre from a tiny, south-east facing home block; eight year old vines. Slightly variable soils from top to bottom, though primarily shallow (10-15cm) glauconitic clays over well-drained limestone. Biodynamic from inception. The wine simultaneously flatter and grips with a glorious nose of baked peach, pate brisée, and yellow flowers - acacia and fennel blossom. Also a comfortable note of warm cornbread. Lush on entry, but quickly turns streamlined, from stony acidity and girdling phenolics: great volume and energy, condensing and accelerating on the palate.



1 tonne/acre from this steeply inclined, east facing home block. Gorgeous soils, with nut and crumb structure and great mineral fertility: 30% clay, 15-20% active lime. Again, biodynamic from inception.

Lion's Tooth (aka dent de lion aka dandelion used in biodynamic prep 506) is a late April pick, whole bunch pressed, in the basket press borrowed from neighbouring Bell Hill; no settling, no SO<sub>2</sub>. Vineyard yeast ferment of 9 months, in a second use 450L puncheon. Natural malolactic. The wine is bottled without filtration and fining just as the good lord intended. Thus superb Chardonnay has flavours of yellow peach, ground almonds, and lemon curd. Very fluid, very long.

Emergent aromas of sliced pear, hot stone, hawthorn (blossom), and alyssum. Immediately dense and powerful, rich but stern; something nearly solid about this wine. An intense kind of inwardness, the wine folding in upon itself, condensing to an astonishing saline core. Enormous force and length, with alternating assertions of golden flavour - ripe pear, toast, flower honey, nuts - and chalk-hard structure. Like all of Mike and Claudia's wines a period in the decanter is salutary and brings out the intrinsic floral components.

Riverbrook Riesling is a delight. Powerful bouquet of yellow fruits - mirabelle, muskmelon, golden peach - and herb and weed flowers: chamomile, wild fennel. Also an unusual, but intriguing musky/dusty note, no doubt from the noble rot. Wonderfully rich and broad, mouth-coating and expansive, but with no troubling loss of detail or energy. Slippery and insistent at the same time. Long, complex, ripe yellow finish, with an attractive almond-kernel grip balancing the fruit sweetness.

Rose Vineyard Late Harvest Riesling is harvested in late May at 1.8 tonnes/acre with 85% noble rot, 15% shrivelled golden berries. The grapes are whole-bunch pressed, unsettled, fermented with vineyard yeasts and no temperature control in tank, for 18 months. Bottled unfinned, but filtered, on the summer equinox with a residual sugar of 110 g/l.

The wine is limpid straw/gold, with coppery highlights. Pungent, musky, dried fruit (quince, apricot) bouquet, with a multitude of spice hints: dried ginger, coriander and fennel seeds, caraway. Exciting and exotic: hoisin and lemongrass and Asian herbs and sesame and wild honey. Begins viscous and super-concentrated, but diffuses in a lush and invigorating way, spreading to coat and refresh every part of the palate.

Calvert Pinot is from a schist and quartz sand vineyard managed by the Felton Road team in Bannockburn, Central Otago. "Whole cluster, warm ferment on the indigenous yeasts and long cuvaision. 14 months on lees in French barriques (25% new) before bottling without filtering or fining. Thyme branch, creosote, raspberry puree; a note of bruised blackberries in fresh cream. Reelingly floral: hedgerose, nasturtium, lavender. An intriguing muscat/orange zest component - musk this year in place of spice. Rich and broad, expansive, alluring and inviting without becoming profligate; very ripe, something almost essential, but nothing reduced or preserved; really saturates the palate and senses, in a lush but invigorating way. Its delicate and finely wrought, with sinewy cherry and herb flavours and silky tannins that impart great elegance to the wine. While other New Zealand Pinot Noirs display Burgundy-like attributes, this one tastes positively Burgundian, in a relatively light bodied, Côte de Beaune sort of way."

Earth Smoke Pinot comes from 32 hl/ha vines from the east-facing home block situated on deep, well structured, clay-limestone soils: 30% clay, 12-15% active lime. This vineyard has been biodynamic from inception.

Late April pick, hand destemmed, 10% whole cluster. Ambient soak of 5-7 days, warm vineyard yeast fermentation (33C), 27-28 day cuvaision. Natural, spring malolactic. Ten months on original lees, in French barriques, 25% new, then held a further 6 months in tank. Bottled unfinned and unfiltered, in September 2010.

A bit cloudier still, and a shade more towards brick (the wine refused to settle naturally). Intensely and complexly scented: cacao, blood orange, tamarind, kelp, old rose, and here, a richness of things autumnal – game, wet earth, fallen leaves, fungi. A dark cherry/black plum note abides and combines.

Wonderful richness and grip: rewarding that a wine so light in colour can offer such palate authority. Tasting this precipitates a kind of crashing through layers – of silk, stone, fruit, spice and game. Finishes tight and long, with a pronounced, limestone-driven salinity.

The "Earth Smoke" Pinot Noir gives a very pale ruby, slightly cloudy colour and a good intensity of funky, wild strawberry and soy aromas with nuances of dried herbs and cloves. The medium bodied palate is very elegant with exquisitely soft tannins, medium to high acid and a medium-long finish.

Earth Smoke is named after fumitory, a gentle and tender weed, with a beautiful magenta flower. Its wispy gray-green foliage, rising from newly cultivated ground, does indeed resemble smoke, especially in the half-light of dawn

*We believe that wine, at its most essential and honest, involves the happy collaboration of organic grapes and native yeasts – and very little else. Our young wines therefore will often show a lighter hue, and more opacity, than their industrialised peers. We're confident that the colour of our wine is largely stable, having been raised in the presence of oxygen; any compounds that oxidise easily have already been allowed to do so, and precipitate out. Most of us accept – even celebrate – unfiltered fruit juice, yeasty beer, plunger coffee; why then do we distrust natural, unprocessed wine? We can guarantee you that these wines are healthy and stable, and we believe that their perfume and integrity have been preserved.*

Angel Flower (named after yarrow, a lovely grassland and pasture plant with very fine, fennel-like leaves, and a brilliant, composite mass of delicate white flowers. Yarrow is the basis of biodynamic preparation 502, and has a strong association with heat and light) Pinot Noir is 30 hl/ha yield from a north-facing parcel of nine year old vines on denser, shallower clay-limestone soils: 20% clay, 3-7% active lime. Biodynamic from before planting.

Late April pick, hand destemmed, 10% whole cluster. Ambient soak of 5-7 days, warm vineyard yeast fermentation (33C), 27-28 day cuvaison. Natural, spring malolactic. Ten months on original lees, in French barriques, 25% new, then held a further 6 months in tank. Bottled unfinned and unfiltered.

Angel Flower is very fine with beautiful aromas of red berries, minerals and dust, very beguiling. Finesse and elegance abounds on the palate, yet there is a wonderful richness and fullness despite the elegance, harmoniously filling the mouth. Bright and lifted, fresh and floral (hedgerow flowers, cherry blossom, wild rose), and beautifully spiced: cinnamon, allspice, clove, with a tenor note of dried orange peel.

These are natural wines with amazing vitality that utterly capture both the spirit of the place and the tenderness of the wine growers.

2009 FIELDS OF FIRE CHARDONNAY

2009 LION'S TOOTH CHARDONNAY

2008 RIVERBROOK RIESLING

2009 ROSE RIESLING

2009 ANGEL FLOWER PINOT NOIR

2009 EARTH SMOKE PINOT NOIR

2009 CALVERT PINOT NOIR

2008 ROSE LATE HARVEST RIESLING - 1/2 BOTTLE

## Framingham, Marlborough



Framingham Wines Limited derives its name from the village of Framingham, located in Southern Norfolk in the UK. This small village was the ancestral home of the Company's founder, Rex Brooke-Taylor.

The first wine made under the Framingham label, a Riesling, was released in 1994. The vineyards that produce Framingham wine however, date back to the early 1980's where Rex Brooke-Taylor first started planting the relatively young, stony, free draining river bed soils of the Estate just outside Renwick. The original vines are believed to be the first to be planted in Marlborough on phylloxera resistant rootstock.

The vineyards are being converted to organic viticulture and it is not unusual to see beehives nestling amongst the vines which, one may assume, confers the honeyed flavours to the Rieslings!

Today the Estate produces a range of varieties including; Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Pinot Gris, Gewürztraminer, Pinot Noir and Viognier.

Framingham Sauvignon Blanc is produced from grapes sourced from several Wairau Valley sites each providing a component to the final blend. It is characteristically a dry wine with refreshing acidity and has pungent passionfruit and grapefruit aromas, along with flavours of redcurrant and capsicum and a mineral finish. 30% of lees ageing gives that extra mouthfeel and in 2010 there is a little barrel-ageing for further complexity. "One of the most elegant Sauvignon Blancs around from this vintage, fine and touched with floral fragrance. Fresh, crisp nose with some mild, floral aromatics and a touch of mealiness. Lovely suave impact is fine and fluid, with intense fruit flavours. Mid-palate has good weight and a lovely air of delicacy, finishing crisply citric and fine. Very classy wine, dry and poised with an elegant air." Keith Stewart - [www.truewines.co.nz](http://www.truewines.co.nz).

Riesling is Andrew's pet project. He produces no fewer than four styles: dry, classic, select and botrytis, or Germanically speaking, from trocken to Beerenauslese. And when I say four I mean seven sometimes. The Classic Riesling weighing in at 11-12% alcohol (depending on the vintage) contains 17 g/l residual sugar. It is pale straw/green in colour with a complex nose mixing orange and lemon notes with honeysuckle scents and a classic refreshing gin and tonic finish. Flavours of juicy orange citrus and mandarin, lemon honey and stonefruit surge across the tongue with the residual sugar given lift by the grippy mineral finish. Select Riesling, an exquisite and plain irresistible spätlese-style weighing in at a minimal 7.5% alcohol and 65 grams of residual sugar. The wine floats like a butterfly and stings like yer best German Riesling, seemingly oozing fragrant honeysuckle, guava, sugared pink grapefruit before swathes of ripe acidity tingle and freshen the tongue. The Noble One is a fabulously intense, grapey botrytis wine, balancing unctuousness with cleansing levels of acidity. Lovely, complex aromatics with bush honey, beeswax, mineral and orange marmalade notes mixed with lemon meringue and stonefruit. The palate is extremely concentrated, viscous yet elegant with zesty, lemon and orange marmalade flavours mixed with bush honey and apricot. Low alcohol lends lightness and delicacy despite the evident sweetness in the wine, which is further balanced by a strong seam of acidity, giving a long, mouth-watering finish. Surely one of the greatest sweet wines from New Zealand.

The Pinot Gris is made in the style of Alsace from hand-picked, whole bunch pressed fruit. Lots of work is done in the vineyard to achieve properly ripe grapes with crop-thinning and leaf-plucking ensuring necessary lower yields. Once tank fermentation is complete to achieve the texture required the wines is racked off gross lees and left to age on light lees for seven months. The remaining 25% of the blend is 'wild' fermented in old barriques and stainless steel barrels, this portion also undergoing malolactic fermentation, with lees stirring once weekly also for seven months. This version has spicy aromatics and shows apple strudel like flavours of apples, pears, raisins, pastry and cream. Some residual sugar is retained at the end of fermentation to provide alcohol balance. The resultant wine is opulent with a rich, slightly oily texture, good weight and mouthfeel, and a long finish.

And here's something to tickle potentially the most jaded pickle, namely a Montepulciano from Marlborough. It's savoury and rustic (next year we're going to whack back the oak a little and let the fruit stand out, says Andrew Hedley). Aromas and flavours of spice, black cherries, woodsmoke, tar and minerals supported by some vanilla oak notes and sufficient rasp to get the Abruzzi Tricolours waving. If the burgundy style, or at least the classical burgundy style, is about understatement, then the Framingham Pinot Noir is close to the real thing. The bouquet is quietly floral, pure flowers and cherries, the palate savoury with a hint of game.

F-Series refers to a special project of micro-bottlings that winemaker Andrew Hedley has created. The F-S Viognier grapes are hand-picked and fermented with a mixture of cultured and wild yeasts in a 225l stainless steel barrel, 50l beer keg and 23l glass jar. Once fermentation had stopped, it is transferred into barrels on full lees with a full malolactic ferment and lees-stirring for 10 months. Spicy leesy notes, oily, rich palate with some delicate varietal characters of honeysuckle and apricot stone. The F-S Old Vine Riesling is from the old vines at the back of the winery, left to hang a bit longer than everything else and hand-picked as the vines were closing down with little botrytis. Only the free run juice is used, and this is a pretty natural wine, wild-fermented before racking. Lees-stirring on full lees for 10 months and a partial malo add a creamy, honeycomb note and fill out the palate. Lime and apple fruit, savouriness from the lees contact and terrific minerality from the old vines give a really intense, complex wine which needs food. In Germany this would be classed as a dry wine at 9 g/l residual sugar.

Check out Tom Cannavan's profile on Framingham on the following link.

<http://www.wine-pages.com/features/new-zealand-2011.htm>

2010 FRAMINGHAM SAUVIGNON

2009 FRAMINGHAM CLASSIC RIESLING

2009 FRAMINGHAM PINOT GRIS

2009 FRAMINGHAM F-SERIES OLD VINES RIESLING

2009 FRAMINGHAM SELECT RIESLING

2009 FRAMINGHAM F-SERIES VIOGNIER - 50CL

2009 FRAMINGHAM PINOT NOIR

2008 FRAMINGHAM MONTEPULCIANO

## Clos Henri, Marlborough



Clos Henri is a 96-hectare property purchased in March 2001. The natural, unspoiled land that Clos Henri sits upon drew the attention and admiration of the Bourgeois family who have been farming in Sancerre for ten generations. Historically a sheep station, the virgin land was untouched by the cut of a plough, fertilizers or much human interference. It was this pristine healthy soil that convinced Jean-Marie Bourgeois and his family that this vineyard would be unequalled in the area, and to start their art, passion and tradition anew in Marlborough. With every intention of maintaining the bio-friendly status of the land, the Bourgeois undertook a lengthy process of reviving the soil by planting nutrient rich legumes and crops to adjust the slight nutrient deficiencies their vines would need prior to the first plantings in August 2001. Planting only six hectares a year, the Clos Henri property will take 12 years to fully transform from farm to vineyard.

The site is unique in that it consists of several soil types – gravels and clays as well as sloping land and hillsides. The gravel is found in Renwick: it's this that contributes to the fame of the region's Sauvignon. The result of ancient rivers this type of soil provides wines with elegance and crispness. The second kind of soil is found in Broadbridge, a greyish-brown clay with ochre tints (indicating a high iron content), appropriate to the cultivation of Pinot Noir. Wines produced here are round with complex aromas and good length. The final soil in Clos Henri, a kind of yellow-grey clay, is to be found on the very steep slopes of Wither where the vines enjoy excellent exposure to the sun. All these soils have only been used for pasture and never exposed to insecticides, herbicides or any other form of chemical treatments. The Bourgeois family are committed to maintain the local biodiversity.

The Sauvignon is matured on the fine lees, and, to conserve the delicious citrus flavours, the wine does not undergo malolactic fermentation. So Sancerre or Marlborough Sauvignon? Well, it has stunning aromatic complexity and harmonious mineral and fruit nuances as well as a purity and freshness that suggests good ageing potential. It combines gentle passion fruit and citrus blossom characters unusual in New Zealand Sauvignon blanc, with more leanness of texture and complex intensity in the citrus to passion fruit spectrum.

The Pinot Noir is made from hand-harvested grapes. Following a three-week maceration in stainless

steel tanks, the wine is fermented in small half-tonne open fermenters with gentle hand plunging to enhance optimum colour and tannin extraction and subsequently matured in French barrels with only 30 % new oak and a light filtration prior to bottling. The style again is French; the primary fruit is suggestive of mocha and red berries, there's fruit concentration and roundness and delightfully harmonious tannins. It has texture and contours as they might say in France.

Petit Clos is made from the young vines that don't make the cut for the Clos Henri. The vines are densely planted and canopy management ensures healthy grapes. The yields are low ensuring optimum quality fruit. The Sauvignon is fermented in stainless steel and aged on the lees for six months. It has lovely tropical fruit, but is never cloying. The Pinot is fermented and macerated in stainless steel to conserve the fruity aromas. About 10% is aged in new oak French barrels to soften the tannins and add complexity.

Ste. Solange is the name of the Marlborough church the Bourgeois family found to relocate to the vineyard site to act as cellar door and office. It has since become both Clos Henri's logo and undisputed heart. This small country church originally from the village of Ward, some 50kms south of Blenheim, was deconsecrated and put up for sale in 2001 by its parishioners. Built in the early 1920's from a New Zealand native timber, Rimu, the chapel was lovingly well kept and survived its move to the vineyard over both the Awatere River and the Wither Hills.

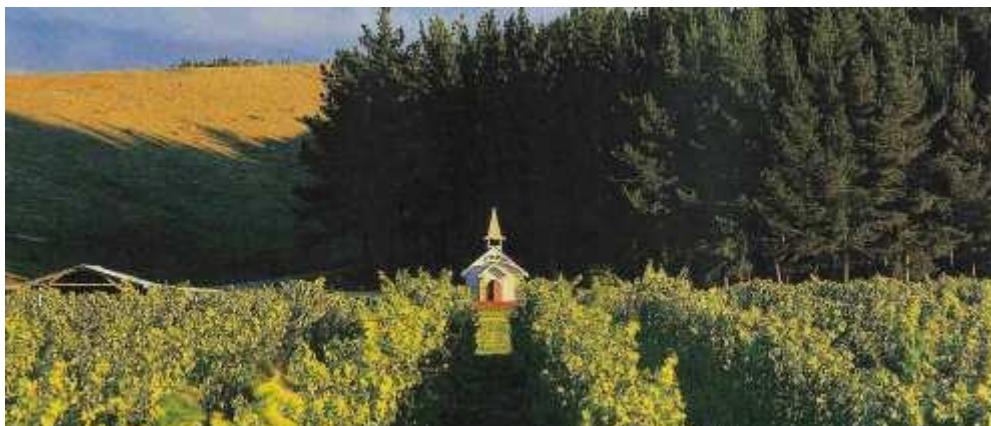
The Bourgeois named the chapel "Ste. Solange" after their patron saint of the vineyards and in the memory of Henri Bourgeois's wife, Solange Bourgeois. Ste. Solange also acts as a tie to the Bourgeois' domaine in France and the logo by which it is recognized in Sancerre - the image of the pointed spire of the church in Chavignol, the village in which the estate is located.

2009 PETIT CLOS SAUVIGNON

2009 CLOS HENRI SAUVIGNON

2009 PETIT CLOS PINOT NOIR

2008 CLOS HENRI PINOT NOIR



## Cambridge Road, Martinborough



Martinborough is blessed with a challenging but rewarding wine growing climate. Winters can be cold and fairly damp, spring gets the full brunt of southern equinoctial winds, summer quickly dries the earth and autumns can see their ups and downs but generally provide the settled warmth to ripen all but the latest-ripening varieties. The vineyards are surrounded by hills to the east and mountains across the north western plain, behind lies the Pacific and the alps of the south island. This unique combination provides the benefit of the all important cooler autumn nights which give these wines much of their structure and finesse.

As part of the Martinborough Terrace Appellation soils consist dominantly from wind-blown loess overlaying silts, gravels and ancient river stones interspersed in places with clay. Although a small block the Cambridge Road site has three distinctly different soil profiles which confers different accents to the fruit. The small 5.5 acre vineyard was first planted by the Fraser family in 1986 to the classic red varieties Pinot Noir and Syrah. These older vines still make up the majority of the block, their roots run deep into the complex soils of the Martinborough Terrace, offering small yields of intensely flavoured berries.

An area well known for the unique calibre and identity of its wines Martinborough is most often associated with Pinot Noir and Cambridge Road is planted with 26 rows of various clones of this grape. The balance (24%) is in Syrah, a mass selection clone dominantly on its own roots, these original vines happen to be among the oldest survivors in the country and certainly the oldest in the Wairarapa region.

These old vines are dry farmed and as many are now over twenty years old are naturally low producers of intensely flavoured fruit. In an effort to modernise the vineyard, exploit its full potential and improve the quality and quantity of fruit the vines will be double planted over the next few years which will yield 7,500 per hectare.

The grapes are hand-harvested and transported to the winery where they are cooled overnight before being destemmed and transferred to the tank by gravity. An ambient cool maceration process then takes place for up to five days, when fermentation starts with indigenous yeasts.

Stainless steel tanks are used for wine making, which allows for individual clonal or block fermentations. Following fermentation, both the free-run juice and the juice from gentle pressings are combined and run into French oak barrels. Over time the objective is to reduce the influence of oak in order to realise the truest vineyard expression in the wines...

Lance Redgwell's philosophy is clear: "I enjoy the wines of people willing to break the mould a little. Most often these producers stick to classic ideas of natural balance and indigenous flora. Wines that are driven by texture, line and length. They tend to have beautiful sites, are focused all year round and have history. This kind of wine grower exists across the planet and I never tire of trying the work of a passionate artisan."

After a year in oak in a mixture of first use and six year old barrels and a second winter in tank, the Syrah is blended with 9% Pinot Noir. The wine is unfinned and unfiltered, grown organically and a very pure expression of what Syrah does on the Martinborough Terrace. Classy Syrah that strays close to the edge of physiological ripeness but stays on the right side of the line. Edgy wine with floral, dark berry plus white and black pepper flavours.

The Pinot Noir comes from various clones predominantly of Pommard origin. Hand harvested and 75% wild fermented then raised in 30% new French oak. The wine has a brilliant clarity and intriguing red fruited perfume. Plums, dark cherries, a touch of chocolate this is a more masculine style of Martinborough Pinot.

2009 CAMBRIDGE ROAD PINOT NOIR

2009 CAMBRIDGE ROAD SYRAH

## Stonyridge Larose, Waiheke Island

On the sunlit uplands of the wine list of the Martinborough Hotel one finds the crème de la crème of New Zealand's wine aristocracy. A vertical of Stonyridge Larose is accorded its own page. It is one of those wines you take against in theory because of the exalted prices and possibly because it is a Bordeaux blend. However, the proof is in the tasting and just because it is expensive doesn't mean that it is not worth it.

Stonyridge Vineyard is a world-renowned Cabernet-blend winegrower, located on the beautiful island of Waiheke, near Auckland, dedicated to producing the finest Cabernet blends in the world (Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Malbec, and Petit Verdot), combining traditional winemaking with meticulous organic viticulture.

Waiheke Island, in the Hauraki Gulf off Auckland, is famous for producing great red wines because of its low summer rainfall and consistently high temperatures. Stonyridge is located in a gently north-facing valley, 1 km from both Onetangi Beach to the north and Putiki Bay to the south.

The vineyards are sheltered from the cold south-westerly winds by Stonyridge, a long ridge running from one coast to the other. A nearby rock quarry gives an indication of the soil type. The soil is poor low-fertility Waitemata clay saturated with nodules of magnesium, manganese, and iron oxides. Magnesium is the central molecule of chlorophyll, essential for photosynthesis, much loved by grape vines and so often deficient in NZ soils. The only fertilizers added are natural-ground limestone and a homemade seaweed emulsion.

There are only six hectares of deliberately low-yielding vines, planted in free draining clay soil containing nodules of manganese. These nodules are said to contribute to the wine's complexity. The vineyard is managed organically and, unusually for New Zealand, is without irrigation. There is a further two hectares at nearby Vina del Mar, but the grapes from this particular vineyard are not destined for Larose.

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Stonyridge, being organic, is also a wildlife haven, lavender bushes are planted for bees, there are cork trees and Stonyridge claims that their olive grove was the first to be established commercially in New Zealand (and very good the olive oil is too).

In addition to the five Bordeaux varieties there are experimental plantings of Syrah, Mourvèdre, Grenache and Tannat. Chardonnay is also planted but this may be pulled out and replaced with red varieties to allow Stonyridge to concentrate on the distinctive red wines for which they are best known.

White and Mackenzie are firm believers that great wine is made in the vineyard, not the winery. Hence the grapes are farmed organically without resorting to herbicides or pesticides, weeds are controlled by sowing grass between the rows, with hand hoeing around the vines. Even the wooden trellis stakes are made from untreated timber. If humidity threatens mildew, rose bushes planted at the end of every row give early warning, and then copper sulphate may be used. Low-yield rootstocks, Bordeaux-style pruning and a summer "green harvest" ensure yields are rigorously controlled and kept to a very low 20 hl/ha. The grapes are picked by hand, taken the short distance to the winery, where they are destemmed and pressed.

There's a pneumatic press for gentle grape pressing and the open-top fermenters allow a manual punching down of the fermenting skins. Before fermentation commences, a three day cold soak extracts colour and tannins. The must is then inoculated with selected rather than wild yeasts and the resulting ferment is temperature controlled to retain volatile elements. The winery's hillside location means the underground barrel store is sited directly beneath, bringing the advantage of gravity feeding the wine to the barrels rather than using harsher pumps.

Larose matures for 12 months in a high proportion of either new oak, anywhere from 70-90% depending on the vintage. The barrels used are unsurprisingly French, usually of medium toast, although it is supplemented by a small proportion of American oak.

The Stonyridge has some fine spices, cedar and pencil shavings are also derived from the oak. A big mouth filling wine, matured in 70% new French oak, engulfed by the huge ripe fruit. Richly flavoured and beautifully complex, with immaculate tannin and amazing structure. This wine is greatly concentrated with a finish that lasts and lasts. This looks like being one of the great Stonyridge vintages.

"The 2008 Larose shows great purity on the nose: blackberry, wild hedgerow and a touch of dried herbs. Quite understated but very good definition. There is a lovely chocolate scent off-stage that should evolve with time (think Pomerol.) The palate is very smooth, nice definition, dominated by the new oak at the moment but there is certainly sufficient fruit to support it. Very fine tannins on the finish that exudes so much precision and poise. It is superb."

2008 STONYRIDGE LAROSE

