

Decanter Club

March 2002

Coming Events:

Mark Scorgie and John Berragan: Gourmet Ice Cream and wine match Thursday 14th March *cost: \$20.00*

Hopefully the Indian summer that is expected will hit on the ice cream and wine night so we can make the most of these delicious ice creams. This is the third ice cream and wine match that Mark Scorgie and John Berragan have done and each one has been interesting. It's true that it can be difficult coming up with good matches with the high sugar content of the ice cream, but there have been some highlights, like sparkling shiraz with double chocolate, or christmas cake ice cream with muscat; yes! If you've not been to one of these tastings, come to be prepared to have your tastebuds challenged. It really does work

Steven Bennett MW: European sojourn Thursday 21st March *cost: \$20.00*

One of the most interesting tastings of last year. Steven is the youngest MW in New Zealand and has an encyclopedic knowledge of wine. He has spent a considerable time working in London and Europe in the wine industry and his portfolio reflects this. This tasting will probably include some relatively left field, but wonderful wines. Steven's experience is not limited to wine only; he spent a year working in Bosnia with VSA amongst other things.

Angela Wilson: Framingham Estate Wednesday 27th March *cost: \$15.00*

One of the risen (not rising, cos they have already made it) stars of Marlborough. Initially, Framingham was better known for their amazing Rieslings, these days, they have extended their wines to include a great Chardonnay, Sauvignon. The Rieslings however will be the stars

Wines Recently Tasted:

Ashwood Grove Shiraz 2000 13.45

The rep has just been in, and after much arm-twisting agreed to maintain the special price on this wine for us. He tells us he's making so little on this wine, that he won't be able to send his children (when he has any) to private school any more. For our customers, this means a great little Shiraz at an affordable price.

Benfield and Delamare 2000 48.55

A real 'boutique' producer from Martinborough, and we have procured our tiny allocation for the year. This year, a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc with as always cellaring potential.

Cloudy Bay Chardonnay 2000 30.55

Very complex and very French. All the bells and whistles with wild yeast fermentation, great fruit concentration and a huge finish. Reeks of class! Has been made to cellar well for up to 5 years or so, which is great for a NZ Chardonnay, but is wonderful drinking now.

De Bortoli Chardonnay 2000 11.65

Cuisine Top 10. Stylish Aussi Chardonnay. This has all the qualities of a much more expensive wine. Rich and complex with spicy oak and lovely tropical fruit flavours.

Forrest Botrytis Riesling '00 375ml 24.25

Revisited this recently over dinner, and yum yum! This is mouthfilling, lush, and rich with its apricot and citrus notes, and the gorgeous musky complexity bought about by the botrytis. Fabulous length on the finish. A style that John does so well.

Forrest sauvignon Blanc 2001 15.25

For the many fans of John Forrest's wines, we've just had another shipment of the savvy after running out last month. We don't really need to tell you about this wine.... It's a complex and classic expression of Marlborough sunshine in a bottle.

Giesen Riesling 2001 13.45

Off dry style with concentrated citrus flavours and an impressive finish. One for the cellar.

Glazebrook Merlot Cabernet 2000 23.35

Overseas markets seem to struggle with the pronunciation of Ngatarawa (I can't think why!), so Alwyn Corban has made use of the Glazebrook name in recent years. Many of you will remember the stunning range of '98 Glazebrook reds; this is a worthy successor from a successful vintage in Hawkes Bay, the Merlot provides the plump upfront fruit on the palate, with the Cabernet providing the acid and tannin backbone. Enjoy!

Isabel Dry Riesling 2001 18.85

Peter and Mark differ in their Riesling likes. Peter prefers them off dry, while Mark tends to the drier style. Mark tried this at the Marlborough wine and Food Festival and managed to source the last case from the suppliers. Absolutely stunning and with a purity of fruit rarely encountered. Bone dry and needing food if drinking now. Sure to be a star in the cellar.

Lawson's Dry Hills Sauvignon Blanc 2001 17.95

A consistently excellent Sauvignon with real class. Made in the classic Marlborough style, it is both mouthfilling and powerful with impressive depth of melon and passionfruit flavours backed up with a pungent and aromatic feel.

Leasingham Bastion Shiraz Cab' 1999 13.94

The baby brother (or sister) of the Bin 16 and a wine which has become a firm favourite for us in recent months. We've just finished the '99 vintage, and a recent sample bottle went down rather well (yes I know it's a tough job hunting out all these nice wines for you) with its combination of spicy Shiraz and blackcurrant cabernet flavours. Excellent value.

Leasingham Bin 61 Shiraz 1999 22.45

Consistency is one of the hallmarks of this wine that we have enjoyed over several vintages. The Bin 61 has a little more 'structure' than some other Shiraz; that bit of tannin making it an excellent food wine in its youth, while the opulent plummy fruit, touch of Clare Valley eucalypt, and vanillin oak will see it proudly through many, many years in the bottle.

Matariki Reserve Syrah 2000 39.55

Leaning definitely towards the Rhone (two bottles of this and you'll be leaning too) with its cracked pepper, mineral and plum notes; these guys are proving to have a dab hand with this variety.

Peter Lehmann Barossa Shiraz 2000 24.25

Several of our customers have been inquiring about this wine, and the new vintage has just arrived in store. For me the last couple of releases of this have been much better balanced. The fruit intensity is well married with the oak, and provides a big wine; yes, but it also an elegant one. The second and third glass (and of yes the fourth) are a real pleasure to drink.

Seifried Pinot Noir 200 20.65

Soft cherry and strawberry characters dominate this fairly light style Pinot. It's a buoyant wine that is firmer and more deeply flavoured than past releases. Well priced and worth cellaring for a year or two.

Taylor's Shiraz 2001 14.35

Heady, sweet, jammy aromas. The palate is simplistic with heaps of clean fruit flavours. It's pretty high in alcohol (14.5%) and shows some very ripe fruit characteristics. Consistently good drinking and represents excellent value for money.

Te Mania Nelson Sauvignon Blanc '01 17.05

Another of the newer labels from Nelson, though these guys have been around for a handful of years now. Like the Waimea, this wine shows the positive effects of the drought 2001 vintage in Nelson, with lots of fruit concentration, another lovely drop to savour during what's left of the summer.

Waimea Sauvignon Blanc 2001 15.25

An up and coming label from Nelson, and one to keep an eye on. I met the winemaker last year and he's a focused chap, passionate about his wine, and striving to better it each year. From a very good year in Nelson, this is fragrant and zesty wine, with a hint of tropical fruit overlaid on the usual gooseberry and grassy notes.

Waterwheel Shiraz 2000 26.05

Wonderful unctuous Shiraz. Rich and ripe with a cascade of blackberry, chocolate and earthy flavours. Very full bodied and mouthfilling now, or cellar for 4–5 years.

Wyndham Bin 555 Shiraz 2000 13.45

We did a good deal on this big spicy wine. Full of fruitcake, berry and spice flavours. Great value

Wines of the Month

Mark's pick:

Brown of Padthaway T-Trellis Shiraz 1999 16.15 The name of this wine is a bit of a mouthful, but thankfully so is the wine itself! Impressively

concentrated, with lovely spice and berryfruit notes, and a touch of liquorice and pepper on the palate. This wine manages to be rich and deeply flavoured without being overly sweet and jammy. I think it's a star and frankly a steal at the price!

Alastair's pick:

Matua Valley Eastern Bays Chardonnay 2000 15.25

This modestly priced Chardonnay is a tropically fruit driven style with fresh, crisp, citrusy characteristics with the merest hint of oak providing good depth. It has an almost silky texture with some nice ripe lemon and pear flavours coming through. Good easy drinking.

Peter's pick:

Dennis Cabernet 1998 21.55

I hadn't tried this for some months now, and the lads raved about this after last week's wine tasting, so I had to retry it for myself. Although the lads drank this with a hefty steak, we managed this with a Poppas pizza (cos nobody does it better than Cranzgots...RIP and yes we still miss them). Moving on... the tannin has settled considerably now making for a more balanced wine. That's pretty much what Peter Dennis (winemaker/owner) thought would happen with this. He assured me that it was made for the long haul, and I would have thought that would be somewhat of an understatement. It's 3 years old, and is still a youngster. This wine really oozes blackcurrants, spice and subtle vanillin oak. For me, McLaren vale is as good for Cabernet as anyone.

The Spaniards are back...Ole!

No, this doesn't mean that the Nina, Pinto and Santa Maria have just sailed up the harbour; nor does it mean that Jose Maria Olazabal and Sergio Garcia have arrived to star at the St Clair golf course; in fact some of our favourite Spanish wines are back in stock. Our importers have just landed a new shipment, and they continue to be stunningly valued wines.

From the Coto de Hayas stable we have more of the Rosado. One of our Christchurch reps that likes this wine reckons that it's drier than the Gobi Desert. While it's not as searingly dry as his wit, it certainly is a more serious style to be enjoyed now. The Auckland MW (Master of Wine) Steven Bennett has written the Tinto Joven and the Crianza in recent North and South magazines. The former is a fresh mouthful of berryfruit and as he suggested is a great little number for the barbeque. The latter wine an altogether bigger beast more reminiscent of Australian wine with an attractive spiciness and a great depth of fruit. Finally, the Castano Dominio Espinal Selection is also back in with its savoury, gamy notes, considerable body and fruit weight and fine tannin structure. This is a wine fighting well above its weight (price range). The previous vintage of this wine was Joelle Thomson's star pick in her

Under \$15 Wine Guide and this vintage is at the very least its equal. We're really please to stock these, and look forward to you all enjoying them as we do.

Coto de Hayas Rosado 2000	\$10.75
Coto De Hayas Tinto Joven 2000	\$10.75
Coto De Hayas Domino Espinal Selection 1998	\$13.45

WYNNS AT A SPECIAL PRICE

The 1998 Michael Shiraz and John Riddoch Cabernet Sauvignon are now available at a super special price of \$74.95 down from \$110.00. We are limiting these to Decanter Club members only.

The 1998 vintage in the Coonawarra produced intense colours and ripe tannins and concentrated flavours for both the Shiraz and Cabernet. This vintage is considered as one of the great vintages. James Halliday has been assessing both these wines since their first vintage and has consistently given them both 5 stars ranking them among the best in Australia.

The John Riddoch Cabernet was first made in 1982 and only with the best grapes available (approximately 1% harvested) from the extensive Wynns plantings. Matured in new French and American oak for 12–15 months and is a "wine of enormous concentration and power." Halliday goes on to say that the Riddoch tends to open up after about 7 years, and seems to last and last "for none of the wines back to 1982 have started to decline."

The Michael Shiraz (initially named Michael Hermitage) was first made in 1990 to stand alongside the John Riddoch. Halliday says it is a "prolific trophy and gold medal winner, every bit as powerful as the Riddoch...and needs great patience to allow it to show its best."

If you are interested in purchasing either of these really terrific wines please see Peter or mark or let us know by email and we will order them in for you. We currently have a few of the Riddoch on the shelf at this price and will order in as needed.

and finally, who's who at Munslow's;

Peter Munslow has been in the wine industry in both the UK and NZ for the better part of 30 years. Peter has judged wines at all the major wine competitions in NZ. He currently is a senior judge/panel leader at the Air New Zealand Wine Show.

Mark Henderson gained his Certificate in Wine from Hawkes Bay. He has an excellent knowledge on NZ wines, and in particular the Central Otago area where he has many good contacts.

Alastair MacLeod has been with Munslow's for almost a year now, after working in the UK wine trade for a year. He is developing a New World palate very quickly.

Peter, Mark and Alastair all work full time and are ably assisted in the shop by university students, Martijn, Shelley, Sophie and Jordan. Pauline runs the essential behind the scenes part of Munslow's.

Cheers, Peter, Mark Alastair and the crew at Munslow's