

MENTELLE NOTES

THE NEWSLETTER OF CLOUDY BAY AND CAPE MENTELLE

Cabernet Cavalcade

Australian wine man James Halliday looks back over 25 years of Cape Mentelle Cabernet...

Over the past twenty years I have met Cape Mentelle founder David Hohnen on numerous occasions, but I am not at all sure I even begin to understand the workings of what is an extraordinary, quicksilver mind. Indeed, at times I wonder whether he understands them himself.

Square jawed and dark visaged, he can appear positively menacing (as he did at a famous tasting in Sydney in the early 1980s when forced to defend his wines), yet he has a superb sense of humour, and absolutely detests pretension in any form.

Which in a roundabout way may explain the metamorphoses which have taken place with the Cape Mentelle Cabernet Sauvignon.

It all started in the 1970s when, in Hohnen's words, "I was making wine in a tractor shed and a single new barrel was worth more than my car."

It also started 25 years ago with a five hectare planting of cabernet sauvignon vines in front of his house, and this (after a few side-tracks in the 1980s) is now the core of a limited production of 2000 to 2500 cases of what most winemakers would be calling a Reserve - or some special name - wine.

The 1980s opened up with a monumental bang: in 1983 Cape Mentelle won the Melbourne Wine Show lottery (aka the Jimmy Watson Trophy) with the '82 vintage.

A remarkable feat, but nothing to compare with winning the Trophy again the following year with the 1983 wine.

They used to say that winning the Jimmy Watson was worth \$1 million in sales - but not to David Hohnen. He found these massively constructed wines, with their high levels of extract and tannins, were extremely difficult to sell.

So in 1984 he made what he describes as a low pH, Brian Croser-style red (which didn't work either), and then in the second half of the 1980s deliberately lightened off the style.



James Halliday lines up with Cape Mentelle's Cabs....

Various techniques were used, including the incorporation (since 1985) of around 5% merlot and the installation of irrigation in 1988 - aimed not at increasing the yield, but at reducing stress, increasing fruit sweetness and reducing tannins. Both these initiatives have worked and are an important part of today's mix: one or two other experiments did not work so well, and have been discontinued.

"If I could produce four wines with the consistency and quality of the 1991, 1992, 1993 & 1994 vintages, I would be exceedingly pleased with myself."

The next significant change came in 1990 with the introduction of more new French oak (a part legacy of Veuve Clicquot's majority investment

in the company.) Someone else's money perhaps, but Hohnen is not given to extravagance, and no one could accuse the wine of being over oaked. The fruit focus was switched back to the home vineyard, and (cautiously) the wine has been given more weight.

Taken together, these modifications have brought a sea change in the style and character of what was always a very good wine, but which is now more than that.

If I could produce four wines with the consistency and quality of the 1991, 1992, 1993 and 1994 vintages, I would be exceedingly pleased with myself.

Hohnen allows himself no such indulgence, but does allow a ghost of a smile to cross his face as he says, "I think we are getting there."

James Halliday, winemaker and prolific writer needs little introduction. He conducted this retrospective tasting for his forthcoming book 'Classic Australian Wines', to be published later this year. The complete tasting notes are to be incorporated on the CD Rom version of his 'Pocket Companion to Australian and New Zealand Wines.'

NEW
RELEASES

Whites Out!

The release of the first wines of any vintage provides tangible evidence of its quality. All that blah-blah pre-release hype can be blown away with the pop of the first cork ...but not in 1996. The Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc heralds a good Marlborough vintage, albeit a tricky one.

When you're growing grapes at 41 degrees latitude, life can be a risky business. Frost, both in spring and at harvest is a possibility and wet cold weather during flowering an even money bet. Usually midsummers are fairly uneventful and account for Marlborough's reputation as the sunshine province of New Zealand. It's in March and April when, two years in five, the proverbial hits the fan. Heavy rains in these months make full ripeness a virtual impossibility.

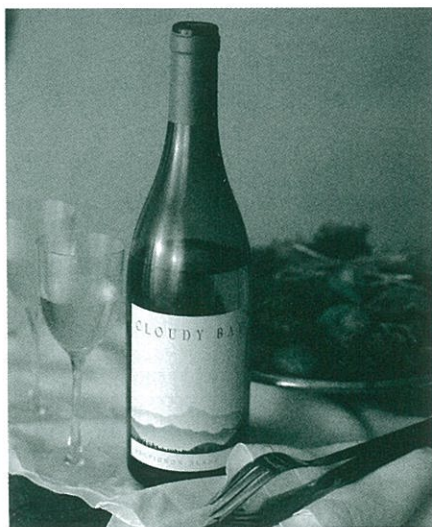
In 1996 things looked great in February, but some rain fell in March. Just as the winemakers resolved to make the best of another patchy deal, the skies cleared and April tried hard to be nice.

The result? Some blocks of sauvignon blanc were picked slightly early and others were hung out to dry in the improved weather, delivering an excellent pass mark.

Kevin Judd took time out from planning his spring fishing trip to write the following notes:

Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc 1996

"Pale straw green in colour, the Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc 1996 displays lifted aromatics reminiscent of passionfruit, wild herbs, nettles and freshly sliced tomato. The palate is generous and racy, exuding tropical fruit flavours complemented by a refreshing crispness."



Pic: Kerren Scott

If the exuberance and zestiness of New Zealand's benchmark sauvignon blanc is a bit too much for your palate, do contemplate the alternative. For October also heralds the release of Pelorus, the vintage sparkling wine from Cloudy Bay. This year it is the 1992 and after three years on yeast lees it has all the complex flavours and aromas bubbly drinkers have come to expect from this great wine.

Sparkling consultant Harold Osborne, who is flat out with vintage on California's Central Coast, took time to jot down this description:

Pelorus 1992

"Honey-gold, Pelorus 1992 displays rich tropical aromas and creamy notes underpinned by complex savoury and nutty characters, the legacy of three years on yeast lees. The full palate brims with ripe tropical flavours and elegant yeast, and has a beguiling long finish."

EDLINES

CMV's London based export director Edward Berry has been dining out.

Pride and pleasure...that I can finally hold my head high in the presence of the world's foodies and say, "Yes, London has made it!" At long last good stimulating cooking *is* available in my own backyard.

It wasn't all that long ago that London dining was a rambling tale of boiled this and overdone that, British food at its very worst with service to match. Better to stay home with the Coronation Street gang and save the disappointments.

But not now. The kitchens of central London have undergone the most amazing transformation (many aided by chefs from Down Under) and we can now dine with pride.

So who are the players? Those previously nameless, faceless hot and bothered cooks in their underground infernos are now miraculously transformed to visible, talented slick entrepreneurs with embroidered names and smart plaques that read - Marco Pierre White, Stephen Bull, Alistair Little, Gordon Ramsay and Antony Worrall-Thompson. Their glossy food dished for all the world to taste and marvel at, and immortalised between the pages of equally glossy coffee table books.

But they were just the advance platoon. What about the Big Brigade? Enter Sir Terence Conran the design guru of the Seventies (the era that taste forgot?) who's turned restaurateur and bequeathed us gastrodome dining on a grand scale. He enticed us first with Bibendum, blew us away with Quaglino's, spoiled us with Pont de la Tour and proved the impossible with Mezzo.

And there'll be more Conran to come... to jostle with the likes of the People's Palace, The Collection, Kensington Place, The Avenue, Coast and L'Odeon - bold new eating emporia, all competing for our patronage.

Then the nations. Italy - a cucina that's always held a special place in our hearts. Remember the spag bol and Chianti Rufina? Now we're awash in olive oil, bruschetta, pancetta, risotto and sun-dried everything, enough to fill the Vatican. And the perpetrators of such excess? Zafferano, Riva, Olivo and the River Café on the Thames.

India - once the land of korma and vindaloo to round off lively evenings of lager and darts, and the hotter the better. Now we're offered authentic regional specialities by Tamarind, the Bombay Brasserie and others.



Inside Vong at the Berkley Hotel, Knightsbridge

And our hotels have decided there is more to life than room service: the Halcyon, the Halkin, Hyde Park (Marco Pierre's place), Grosvenor House (Nico) and the Berkley (Vong), whose revamped lofty dining rooms hum again with the buzz of happy diners.

Suddenly the chic and the social have discovered new platforms: dinner at Daphne and Caprice and lunch at Harvey Nicks. Who would ever have thought it would be fashionable to eat in a shop! Or indeed, to mix munching metaphors as they do at Chutney Mary (Anglo Indian) and Vong (Franco Thai).

Such a feast! So where would I choose to eat on special occasions? Probably at Tante Claire or Aubergine (where they pour Cape Mentelle Semillon Sauvignon) or maybe even, The Restaurant.

MN readers heading to London can write to the Editor c/ PO Box 376 Blenheim for a list of these and other recommended restaurants.

"This wine should be eaten, it is too good to be drunk"

JONATHAN SWIFT

VINEYARDS LICKED



Philatelists and other wine loving purchasers of postage stamps will be interested to learn that come March 1997 New Zealand Post is to release a special stamp issue celebrating New Zealand vineyards. Six regions and six wineries have been selected to feature in this landmark series: Waiheke Island (Goldwater Estate), Hawkes Bay (Te Mata), Gisborne (Millton), Canterbury (Pegasus Bay), Central Otago (Rippon) - and far from least, Cloudy Bay in mighty Marlborough. The stamp will carry a water colour impression by artist Nancy Tichborne of the magic mountain view associated the world over with Cloudy Bay wines. In addition to the stamps New Zealand Post plans to publish a special booklet about the chosen vineyards. So when it's time, do your bit with lick and spit - and spread the word about New Zealand's wonderful wines!

Cloudy Bay and Cape Mentelle wines available from your fine wine retailer

Healthy Prescriptions...

The positive effects of red wine are well canvassed. Why don't researchers ever mention white? Australian nutritionist Rosemary Stanton examines this vexing vinous question.

It is probably fair to say that if wine was discovered today, it would make headlines as a new wonder drug. Sure, there can be adverse effects from a high dose, but that's no different from almost every other substance.

Most medical folk are not brave enough to promote the health-giving properties of wine because they fear litigation should anyone abuse their prescription. As a result, it's the disadvantages of an excess that more often make the headlines. Leaving the less heralded medical advantages of moderate wine consumption as a surprise to many.

Wine can be good for you.

Epidemiologists tell us that moderate drinkers live longer than teetotalers. It's hard to know why because so many factors are involved, and hard to know what gets the guernsey. Should it be alcohol per se or particular alcoholic beverages?

There are other complications too. If wine appears to exert a more beneficial effect than say, beer, is this due to some inherent property of wine? Or could it have more to do with the foods that accompany the beverage, the time of day it is consumed or even the socio-economic status of the person likely to be drinking either beverage?

It is known however that small quantities of alcohol do help people relax and it is possible this may increase longevity.

The food factor has been the most difficult to research. Different foods are consumed with different beverages. For example, beer is often teamed with fatty foods such as chips and other high-fat snack foods, peanuts, meat pies, hamburgers and large fatty steaks. Among 12,000 men attending Australia's Gut Buster courses, none consumed beer and salad! Many people also have a few beers after work, often standing at the bar on their way home, rather than sipping it with a healthy meal.

By contrast, wine has always been consumed in Mediterranean countries along with meals rich in protective foods such as vegetables, nuts and olive oil. The Greeks, Southern Italians, the French and Spanish live long and healthy lives with low levels of heart disease and some cancers. Is it their diet, the wine, their attitude to life or even the climate?

Whole books have been written about the *French Paradox*, characterised by the French eating lots of saturated fat in the form of butter, cheese and cream but having one of the lowest rates of heart disease in the world. Some attribute this to their high consumption of bread, vegetables or,

in the south, olive oil. Others believe the effect is due to red wine. No one has yet sorted out the paradox to the satisfaction of medical researchers but the bulk of scientific opinion gives wine the front runner position.

However, there are still problems. Is it the type of wine, the variety of grape used, something in the French soil, something in the copper sprays used on French vines or some other aspect of cultivation, harvesting and storage? No one knows.

"There is some preliminary evidence to suggest that some white wines, especially sparkling wines, may also have worthwhile quantities of valuable and active polyphenols."

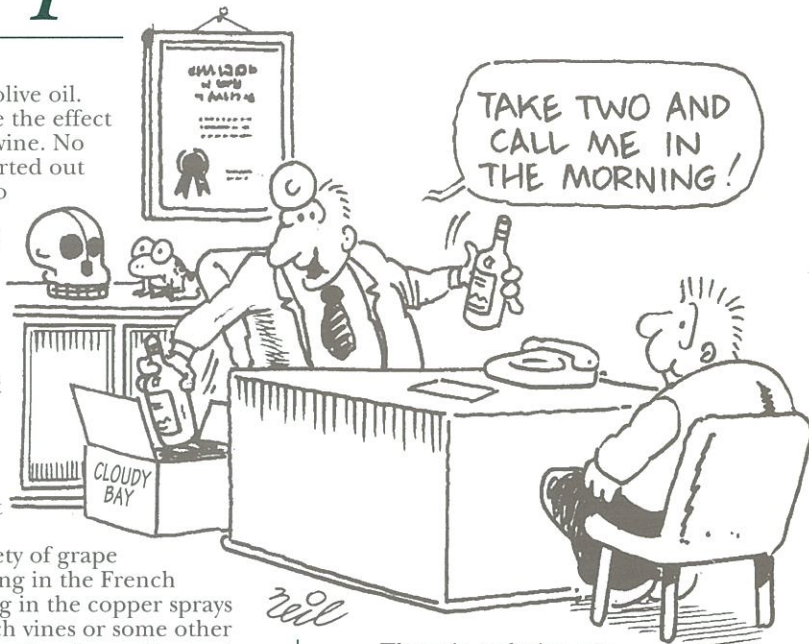
Makers and drinkers of *white* wine are keen to know if their choice is as good - and healthy. In Germany where white wines are the preferred beverage, we don't see the same beneficial effects on longevity. But then the foods they eat are different, as is their attitude to life and relaxation.

All the clues of this tangled muddle are yet to be fully unravelled. However we *do* know that red wines have at least three health advantages. And some are shared by other alcoholic beverages, including white wine.

Consider these facts...

Effect on blood cholesterol Cholesterol in the body is attached to lipoproteins. The loose lipoproteins, known to drop their cholesterol easily are called low density lipoproteins (LDL or 'bad' cholesterol). The tight little scavenger lipoproteins that remove cholesterol from the circulation are known as high density lipoproteins (HDL or 'good' cholesterol.) Alcohol increases the 'good' HDL cholesterol in the body and red or white wine, beer and spirits have equal status in this respect.

Antioxidant effect Over the last couple of years, heart disease researchers have found that 'bad' cholesterol is only really bad when it is changed by a process known as oxidation. *Anti oxidants* help prevent oxidation. Olive oil, vegetables, fruits, nuts, tea and red wines contain potent antioxidants.



Those in red wine are known as polyphenols. One of the most potent, resveratrol, comes from grape skins, and is not biologically active until it has been chemically changed by the fermentation process. There is some preliminary evidence to suggest that some white wines, especially sparkling wines, may also have worthwhile quantities of these valuable and active polyphenols but at present, red wine is the star performer.

Anti-clotting factors Many people take half an aspirin a day to stop their blood becoming sticky and clotting, a problem which can block arteries or cause heart attacks. Research has determined that a glass of red wine contains a similar quantity of anti-clotting agent to aspirin, although so far similar beneficial factors have not been identified in white wine.

So, do your body a favour. Pull the cork on your favourite bottle of cabernet merlot or fresh crisp summery sauvignon blanc: both will do you good, and the red better.

Rosemary Stanton is one of Australia's leading nutritionists, the author of 22 books including Rosemary Stanton's Healthy Cooking and Windbreaks (on flatulence), and regularly enjoys the vinous equivalent of aspirins.

MUSTS

Decanter Cloudy Bay & Cape Mentelle Masterclass

Friday 1 November, 1996
Landmark Hotel,
222 Marylebone Rd, London
Bookings: FAX (44 171) 738 8688
£20 per person

Marlborough Wine & Food Festival

Brancott Vineyard, Blenheim
Saturday 8 February, 1997
Details: PH (64 3) 577 8977
FAX (64 3) 577 8966

Desert Drop

Mentelle Ambassadors continue to prowl the globe, fetching and carrying bottles of Cloudy Bay to far flung places to sip solo or share with friends. This time it's Kristin David from Wellington who was holidaying in the Swiss Alps... Yes, the picture is in Egypt... but Kristin made a detour. She stopped in Zurich for a day and stumbled into a wine shop that just happened to stock *that* liquid drop. So she bought a bottle of *Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc* to share with her Swiss mates, only to discover they'd gone on the wagon! Back into her bag went the unwanted ambassadorial bottle and off on a Nile cruise for its subsequent and far more auspicious opening - right at the feet of the Sphinx. And Kristin tells the much travelled bottle opened well!

If you too wish to be part of CBV's export effort, keep your eyes peeled. Next time you're in some distant corner of the globe and spot a bottle of Cloudy Bay or Cape Mentelle - on a wine list



Kristin David sipping Sauvignon Sphinx-side

in Kazakstan, in a bistro in Belize or a bar in Saudi Arabia (just kidding!) - buy it and take a photo, then send it to The Editor, Mentelle Notes. (Taking the bottle with you is highly commended but ideally MN ambassadors should purchase an off-shore bottle.) MN will publish the best and most alluring photo and the winning Mentelle Ambassador will receive a FREE mixed case of Cloudy Bay wine. All entrants receive a CB T-shirt.

BROUGHT TO BOOK

Seekers of vinous knowledge and truth might be interested to learn of a new book, *The Ultimate Encyclopedia of Wine*, English wine communicator Robert Joseph's latest effort to pour more wine and wisdom into waiting glasses the world over.

Joseph has long been on a mission to demystify wine and this 250 plus page reference goes a long way toward doing so. Follow Joseph on a global grape gallivant from Alsace to Zimbabwe, from grand Bordeaux châteaux to tiny traditional estates in Tuscany and high-tech juice factories in California. He even calls in on Cloudy Bay and Cape Mentelle, stopping long enough to list them both among his 'Top Producers.'

The publisher's jacket blurb tells us the book is "informed and unpretentious...with the essential knowledge to buy wine with confidence," a commendation that no one at Cloudy Bay is willing to dispute. For the book's cover features a 25cm high bottle of *Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc*, just 5 cms shy of the real thing. The Cloudy Bay marketing department owes Robert Joseph and publisher Carlton Books a lottery ticket....

The Ultimate Encyclopedia of Wine by Robert Joseph is published by Carlton Books. Available from South Pacific Book Imports RRP \$69.95 inc GST

L.A. LORE

Not much phases the CBV winery crew (except of course occasional neglect by the 'Stein' fairy) but they were somewhat nonplussed to discover from James Healy's Yankee mate, Jim Clendenen of Au Bon Climat Vineyards, that a recent issue of the *L.A. Times* gave its vote for 'Wine of the Week' to the *Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc 1995*. The eagle-eyed Clendenen claims the citation proves one of three things: One. Yank wine writers know nothing. Two. NZ dollars are good in the USA, or Three - "You make great wines." James and the team are still deciding....

THE WILD ONE

The winemakers at Cloudy Bay are continually exploring alternative wine styles and from time to time produce small batches of special limited release wines. The best of these are bottled and sold exclusively from the winery.

In 1994 the production crew put the textbooks to one side, threw caution to the wind and allowed a prime parcel of sauvignon blanc, grown with tender loving care by Philip and Ngaire Neal at their Motukawa Vineyard in Rapaura, to do its own thing!

Once in barrels, a host of ungainly looking yeasts (introduced from the vineyard) took the helm and transformed the pristine juice into a savoury, rather gangly but highly perfumed young wine. After the wild bunch had finished their stuff, the wine was allowed to go through a complete malolactic fermentation in French barriques.

A full 18 months pampering in those oak barrels has produced a wine with a mellow savoury personality (derived from the natural yeasts) and floral aromatic highlights. What's more, the softening effects of the malo have combined to produce mouth-filling rich flavours... a unique and distinctive sauvignon blanc, released under the Cloudy Bay label as the *Motukawa Vineyard Sauvignon 1994* - a strictly limited offer to *Mentelle Notes* and Cellar Door customers only.

Cloudy Bay Motukawa Vineyard Sauvignon 1994

Kevin Judd describes his wild child as:

"Straw coloured and loaded with exotic floral aromas and lush tropical fruit. Flavours reminiscent of honeysuckle and lychee are complemented by a sprinkling of marjoram. The palate is full-bodied and creamy, finishing on a lingering herbal note."

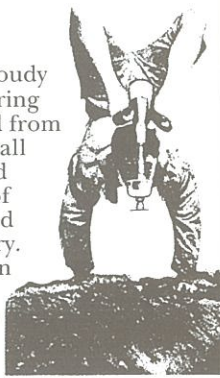
YULETIDE TREAT

The ever reliable Cloudy Bay Santa has been on the case already, dropping in with his recommendations for this year's selection of festive wines for all *Mentelle Notes* readers to enjoy over the coming summer season. He and his chauffeur Rudolph tasted the current range and came up with another classic case of Yuletide cheer....

RUDOLPH'S MIXED BLESSING

Comprises four terrific wines - the just released *Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc 1996* (4 bottles), three bottles each of the *Cloudy Bay Pinot Noir 1994*, a wine which Jock Graham places in "the top league" and the *Cloudy Bay Cabernet Merlot 1994* - plus two bottles of the special release barrel-aged *Cloudy Bay Motukawa Sauvignon 1994*.

This year's Mixed Blessing will surely tickle the palates of all discerning wine drinkers, especially at the cheery Christmas case price of **\$278.80**. Be sure to place your order early so gadabout Rudolph has plenty of time to stack your stocking!



SEND 'EM MENTELLE THIS XMAS

Santa's finalising his northern hemisphere rounds in a couple of weeks and will be

happy to drop in on your UK based family and friends if you would like to fill their stockings with a case of Kiwi Christmas cheer. Cloudy Bay's cellarman has just despatched a special delivery of *Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc 1996* to our man in London, Edward Berry, all of which has been set aside for Santa's UK sleigh. This year for the first time he's also got *Pelorus 1992* on board - six bottle packs of New Zealand's premium bubbly, previously selected as 'Best Sparkling' by the *Penguin Good New Zealand Wine Guide*.

Stocks of both wines are limited, so place your order (as indicated on the form overleaf) soon, and definitely before MONDAY 2 DECEMBER so Rudolph can ensure pre-Christmas delivery. The listed case price (full cases only) includes VAT and delivery to mainland U.K.

If you would like to SEND EM MENTELLE at other times of the year, please telephone the winery on (03) 572 8914 or fax (03) 572 8065 for details.

Indian Reservation

David Hohnen recently took a trip to Southern India

My dad used to play rugby in Bangalore and my mother-in-law went to school there. So you might think I would have been at least half enthusiastic when I got the call to visit a winery in Bangalore. But my vision of India was not like the old man's - of football on hard dirt and bottomless glasses of G&T at the Club afterwards, nor of the pampered childhood in shady bungalows cooled by the punkawallahs extolled by my mother-in-law.

India to me was associated with Punjabi shirts, string beads, henna'd hair and the doped out hip philosophies of the free love, peace and brown rice set who settled in Margaret River in the '70s. Even worse were the stories told by these bombed out truckers of erratic plane schedules, stomach bugs more vengeful than Genghis Khan and curries so hot they made the soles of your feet smoke.

So when I arrived at the palatial Windsor Hotel at the end of a flawless schedule of flights via Singapore and Madras, I was relieved, still continent and in a much better frame of mind than I expected, ready to meet my host Mr Kanwal Grover and his son Kapil, who produce India's finest wines at Doddabalapure near Bangalore.

The European vine has been grown in India for many centuries and wine was enjoyed by the Mogul emperors and sultans. These days most viticulture in India is directed to table grapes, but there are changes in the air.

The climate of the grape growing regions is sub-tropical. This means the vines have no dormant period and produce two crops a year. The first and best harvest is in April at the end of a hot growing season. The second is in October, and is far more fraught due to the onset of the monsoon season.

Soils are red loams, not dissimilar to those of northern Western Australia, called 'pindan.' In fact the Doddabalapure countryside is reminiscent of Australia with its grasslands, brown hills and clumps of



Cast in stone, Grover's Vineyard, Bangalore

gum trees (planted from seed provided by the Indian government.)

Vines are mostly trained to the pergola system about six feet above the ground, and surprisingly the entire structure is supported on solid granite posts. Apparently round Bangalore, it's cheaper to split and chip a slab of granite than to chop down a tree to make a post.

The Grovers started planting Doddabalapure in 1983 having thoroughly researched the project and privately importing over thirty French varieties. Of these, the most successful has been cabernet sauvignon and clairette blanc, which today form the basis of the three wines produced in the modern winery.

The wines are a cabernet sauvignon dry red, a dry rosé and a dry white 'Blanc de Blancs' clairette. All three offer a fresh and attractive taste and point to a good future for wine drinkers in a land where a Cadillac is more likely to be encountered than a corkscrew.

CLOUDY DECADE

What do you do on the first Tuesday night of every month? Tune in to the TVNZ News, play squash, take young Tom to Cubs or Emma to jazz ballet, do the ironing...or pull the cork on favoured wines?

Well, since 1978, Sydney's First Tuesday Tasting Group - a band of merry men and two women has been doing just that. Led on by the hirsute entomologist Dr Murray Fletcher (the group's only original member) they recently lined up his personal Sauvignon Blanc collection, ten green bottles from Cloudy Bay - from the very first 1985 vintage to 1995.

Dr Fletcher reports the following findings: 1989 still had genuine fresh gooseberry characters on the nose and a toasty palate with the fruit holding; 1988 was similar to aged semillon with vanillin custard and an acid finish and 1987 showed cloves and citrus with a touch of oxidation. The star of the line-up was the 1986. Fletcher's notes recount "A bright green/gold colour and still remarkably youthful. The nose was toasty with gooseberry. The palate had lifted capsicum / gooseberry and a long, clean balanced finish. A lovely wine."

But it was the very first 1985 vintage that really raised eyebrows. Fletcher records a wine with "A delightful lifted grass/capsicum fruit character on the nose mellowed with earthiness. The palate had a solid whack of acidity with the herbaceous fruit just starting to fade."

All of which suggests that those of you who haven't emptied all your Cloudy Bay bottles might consider a trip to your cellar to explore the ageing qualities of sauvignon blanc. MN looks forward to Sydney's Tuesday Tipplers' subsequent decade report, in 2006!

Cloudy Bay Pinot Noir 1994

"An impressive debut, definitely one of the best local pinots for me, with a complex bouquet of mushrooms, game and smoky oak, and plum and cherry flavours. Nice and velvety."
Graeme Barrow, DAILY POST

"More robust with more backbone than most versions from Marlborough but with an elegance that propels it at once into the top league."
Jock Graham, NZ HERALD

"A beautifully 'polished' wine... for a special occasion or simply for the love of wine."
NZ WOMAN'S WEEKLY

Pelorus 1992

"A wine with increasing finesse but retaining its traditional richness and lingering finish. An outstanding New World sparkling wine."
Michael Brett, SUNDAY STAR TIMES

"Hard to differentiate from French Champagne in a blind tasting. Excellent."
NK Yong, BUSINESS TIMES, Singapore

Cloudy Bay Chardonnay 1994

"It leaps out of the glass saying, 'Drink me', so we did."
Hot Tip, DECANTER, July 1996

"Exceptional with rich, lingering, limey flavours, excellent balance and nice mouth feel. It vies to be the best in a vintage which produced some wonderful chardonnays..."
Michael Brett, SUNDAY STAR TIMES

"Seems slightly more subtle than previous years but with that trademark complexity of wonderful peach, honey, vanilla and tropical fruit. If you like your chardonnay to resemble a big bowl of fruit salad - this is your bag."
★★★★★ 5 stars

(The acme of style, a fabulous, faultless wine...)
PENGUIN GOOD AUSTRALIAN WINE GUIDE

Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc 1995

"Perfect balance is the keynote of this high-flying savvy. Ripe fruit, barrel fermentation meanness and spicy oak live in perfect harmony, creating an immediately attractive overall impression."
★★★★★ 5 stars

PENGUIN GOOD NEW ZEALAND WINE GUIDE

"Cloudy Bay is the Holy Grail - the sacred tasting glass for many oenophiles..."
Neil MacLean, SUNDAY TIMES, UK



The Tuesday Tipplers. From left: Tony Norman, Paul Greenfield, Geoff Bickham (rear), Karl Conning, Dr Ross Higginson, Dr Trevor Gibson, Richard Jones, John Macdonald (front), Samantha Fenton, James Keneally, Sara-jane Keneally, Dr Murray Fletcher, Geoff Paisley.

MENTELLE NOTES

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