

# MENTELLE NOTES

THE NEWSLETTER OF CLOUDY BAY AND CAPE MENTELLE

## Where have all the apples gone?

*Marlborough was once a fertile orchard area, now the Wairau Valley is carpeted in grape vines. David Barnsley reports.*

Should my Swiss neighbour ever feel inclined to re-enact the story of William Tell he might be hard put to find one of the plot's essential ingredients: an apple.

Everywhere you go in Marlborough you will see orchards for sale, orchards in the process of being grubbed up, or vineyards where orchards used to be. The reason is a classic example of market forces at work.

Grapes are in demand because New Zealand wine is in demand; apples on the other hand face a world over-supply and falling demand. The result of this equation is that while grapes show healthy financial returns on investment, apples struggle.

Currently apple orchards are disappearing faster than you can say 'Granny Smith' and the old adage about an apple-a-day keeping doctors away has been replaced by 'a glass of wine a day keeps heart attacks at bay.'

Statistics show that in 1998-99 there was a 26% growth in vineyard areas in Marlborough, which now boasts a total of 3477 hectares under vine. Currently this comprises 39% of New Zealand's total plantings, a figure predicted to rise to 41% by 2002.

At present, sauvignon blanc is the most planted variety in Marlborough at 1457 ha (42%), followed by chardonnay (25%), pinot noir (10.5%), riesling 7% and cabernet sauvignon (4%). A recent survey has predicted an overall increase of another 31% between 1999 and 2002, an extra 1066 hectares still to go under vine. This is nearly double that of the region with the next most expansive forecast, Hawkes Bay.

Possibly the most remarkable aspect of Marlborough's viticultural history has been the speed of its development. When I started growing grapes in 1981 there were three



Photo: Kevin Judd.

wineries and a couple of dozen local contract growers. Nineteen years later there are 48 wineries and 200 growers.

Predictably, the demand for land suitable for viticulture has resulted in skyrocketing land prices. Only 10 years ago you could buy land in Rapaura, the prime growing area, for \$5000 an acre. Now you could expect to pay \$25,000 – if you could find some for sale.

*‘Former orchardists and pastoralists are happy to cash in, take the money and run.’*

Bare grape land is hard to find in the Wairau. A quest complicated by the need for irrigation water. While the main valley sits on an aquifer, the side valleys are not so fortunate. Irrigation schemes for these valleys are in the pipeline (literally), with the lower Waihopi scheme expected to be running before the end of the year.

Even in the main Wairau valley there is some concern over demands made on the aquifer and the District Council has held seminars to foster responsible use of limited ground water supplies.

The other limiting factor is frost. Marlborough is recognised as a marginal area for grape growing and already these margins are being pushed due to the shortage of suitable frost-free land.

So the face of lowland Marlborough has dramatically changed from predominantly mixed crops, orchards and livestock to widespread grape plantings, fringed in spots by olive groves.

So what has happened to the apple orchardists?

Estimates suggest that 15-20% have sold to grape growing interests or converted orchards to vineyards. Those growers with older, unfashionable and unprofitable varieties were the first to sell. But rest assured this does not compare to the dispossessed and landless 18th century Scottish Highlanders or the Joad family in *Grapes of Wrath*.

Continued page 2



NEW  
RELEASE

## WHITE OUT!

Ask any Marlborough vigneron about the first harvest of the 21st century and you're likely to hear mumbles about irregular flowering and reduced yields. In fact, Marlborough's overall harvest was down 10.3%, while Cloudy Bay's sauvignon crop was terrific quality but 30% lighter than projections.

All this of course is governed by Mother Nature, but tell that to the marketers. So it's just as well in any one year the new releases span a number of vintages, or some of us might have to go thirsty.

Certainly, one-eyed Kiwi wine drinkers won't go without because the overall harvest reached record levels – 80,000 tonnes of ripe, juicy grapes. However, sauvignon blanc production was down nearly 25% overall and pinot noir was up 30%. So, all you'll need to do is drink a bit more red than white, and have a word to Mother Nature the next time you spot her, at the footy or your next picnic.

Cloudy Bay's spring releases offer immensely pleasurable sipping, and winemaker James Healy (who's been very busy helping organise the forthcoming pinot conference) recommends these four new whites for relaxing nights:

### Pelorus Vintage 1996

*'Pinot noir and chardonnay grapes are sourced from select sites in the Wairau Valley of Marlborough to produce the base wines for Pelorus Vintage, the premium sparkling wine of Cloudy Bay. Creamy, buttery aromas with hints of fresh grapefruit and dried apple lead into a rich and toasty palate. Enticing flavours of freshly baked bread and nuts complement a persistent finish.'*

### Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc 2000

*'From a low cropping but otherwise excellent vintage, the Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc 2000 displays varietal aromas of fresh tomato vine, passionfruit, yellow gooseberry and basil. An attractive palate shows a mixture of freshly crushed herbs and tropical fruit which is perfectly balanced by juicy acidity.'*

## PORT BARRELLING

Those who know their maritime history will be aware that we owe a great deal to Captain Cook. For it was he who christened Cloudy Bay in which he moored in 1770.

This affinity with the intrepid seafarer continues in miraculous ways. Take this large port barrel being unloaded from the modern day *HM Bark Endeavour* at Lyttleton docks. The precious cargo (containing old tawny port) had just circumnavigated the globe, and was headed to the Cloudy Bay winery for bottling. Captain Chris Blake intends that these collectors' items will be auctioned to raise funds for his ship. The initiative also reduces the risk of further 'evaporation', a natural phenomenon spurred by long nights at sea.



Unloading the precious port.

## CLOUDY BAY T E K O K O



1 9 9 7

### Cloudy Bay Te Koko 1997

*'Deliciously intense with a bouquet showing honeyed lychee, floral notes and a suspicion of smoke, Cloudy Bay Te Koko 1997 is an excellent illustration of an alternative interpretation of the white sauvignon grape. The palate is soft, richly flavoured and textured, with a lengthy savoury finish.'*

### Cloudy Bay Late Harvest Riesling 1999

*'It was an excellent year for this variety in Marlborough conjuring a wine bursting with aromas of ripe apricot, honeycomb and citrus fruits. The palate is sweet showing strong fruit flavours and it is delicately crisp and youthful, an indication that the Cloudy Bay Late Harvest Riesling 1999 will develop for some time if correctly stored.'*

## SLICK SNIPPERS

Every year Marlborough's vineyard workers compete at the Silver Secateurs competition, initiated in 1995 by the Marlborough Grapegrowers Association to recognise the vital role played by the dedicated teams who prune, tie and train the countless thousands of vines that carpet the Wairau.

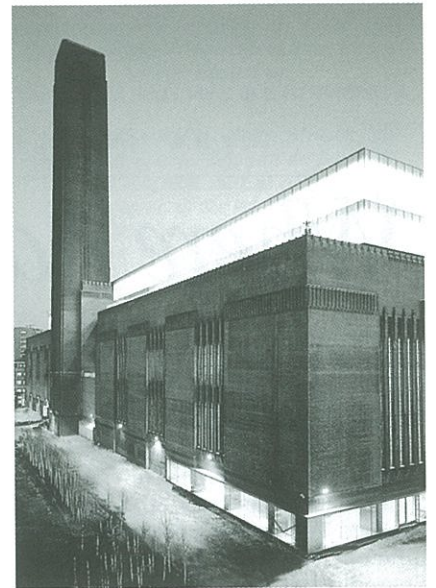
Cloudy Bay hosted this year's Silver Secs day which attracted a record 51 individual entries and 12 teams. Cloudy Bay's contract crew – Melissa Taylor, Chris McKendrick and Ben Watere won the team event, while Sue O'Leary won the Open Tying event.



Tying times...

## TATE BUBBLES

London's much vaunted Tate Modern (formerly a turbine room of a power station) has opened with considerable fanfare and debate. While the arts world argues the merits of the new gallery, thirsty visitors are heading for the ground floor cafe which is pouring *Pelorus* by the glass. A gallery spokesperson claims the opening wine list is 'experimental' but what better way to add sparkle to art?



London's exciting new art museum pours *Pelorus*.

## LANGTON'S TRIO

Every year the Australian wine auctioneers Langton's release their Classification of Australian Wines, a ready-reckoner for wine enthusiasts who trade in the secondary wine market.

*Cape Mentelle Cabernet Sauvignon* has for several years been classified 'Excellent A' but moves up to 'Outstanding' – 'a benchmark quality wine with a very strong market following'. It is also pleasing to see two new entrants in the 2000 list – *Cape Mentelle Shiraz* and *Chardonnay*, both rated 'Distinguished' which Langton's translates as 'emerging classics.' Time to take a trip down to your cellar...

## WHERE HAVE ALL THE APPLES GONE? cont...

Former orchardists and pastoralists are happy to cash in, take the money and run. Others have discovered that grapes offer salvation. The reason for the apparent paradox is of course the escalating value of land under the apple trees, a real temptation to those who do not fear the prospect of mono-culture.

One thing is certain – farming of any kind is cyclical and in all probability the good days may one day return for apple growers, particularly those with modern, fashionable varieties. In the meantime it is very much the case of 'Where have all the apples gone? Into vineyards (almost) every one.'

*David Barnsley has lived in Marlborough since 1969 and has been involved in the wine industry since 1981, both as a grape grower and editor of Winepress.*



# Of Tarts and Bastards

Keith Stewart tackles pinot at Cloudy Bay's inaugural Pinot Noir Tasting

It was pinot noir which made the point that it was time to stop pretending that wine is civilised.

Confronted with a raunchy collection of sensual bandits at Cloudy Bay's meticulously managed Pinot Noir Tasting, it was obvious that the cute language of wine was not enough for such a wild gathering of vinous debauchery. And where better to make the break than in Marlborough, a frontier territory in spite of its acceptance in polite wine circles.

Here in the Antipodes, as those in the top-heavy part of the globe like to refer to Australia and New Zealand, we have established a reputation for being blunt. We play games to win, rather than to participate, and we call things names which reflect their true character, the 'bloody shovel' attitude.

Except with wine, where for some obscure reason we have been led by the effete language of drawing-room drinkers from the Victorian age, for whom a little tart was something in riesling at which you pursed your lips politely.

Now, there were a couple of big tarts amongst Cloudy Bay's offering of pinot noirs, but they were not the sort you would purse at, rather you would lap them up with gusto and deep murmurings of satisfaction.

So let's gut the euphemism, stuff it with discretion and give pinot noir a name which gives us the whole technical picture: The Black Bastard.

Make no mistake, this is not an unusual name for pinot noir, at least not amongst winemakers who are struggling to make it behave long enough to get the best out of it.

Let's face it, pinot noir doesn't like being told what to do, full as it is of wayward tendencies and an inclination to let it all hang out just when you want it to put on a good performance. A variety without known parents, as any respectable ampelographer will confirm, whose origins linger somewhere in the feral shadows of Celtic Gaul. In short, a bastard. Being noir, a black bastard.

Deliciously so. This is not the sort of wine which makes an austere appeal to your intellect, preferring to stroke your sensory G-spot with its overt fecundity. Leave intellect to claret, where class is the defining concept of winemaking, here in Burgundy country the word is style.

So why would Cloudy Bay, the most sophisticated of wineries, put on an organised tasting of pinot noirs, exposing their sophisticated reputation to the black bastard's wickedness?

True, they had a posse to corral the beast, led by marshall John Comerford who has a reputation as a hard man where pinot noir is concerned, with James Healy as



Pouring the pinots.

deputy and a tracker renowned for getting his wine.

But in front of wine enthusiasts eager for any wine to step out of line it could become a wicked day.

And it was, because the wines never wimped out. Wickedness to the fore they flaunted themselves, their visceral sensuality, their blatant appeal to our wildest tastes, even on occasion, to passions which have no place in polite society. Damned good!

---

*'There were a couple of big tarts amongst Cloudy Bay's offering of pinot noirs.'*

---

Better, it staggered on the edge of debauchery, especially at lunch where the wines which during the tasting had stood up to be counted, lay down to satisfy. Californians which made your pulse race, raunchy Australians, French boudoir bastards and sexy New Zealanders, a chaos of indulgence.

Tasting notes? Bugger that, I was too busy drinking. Should you want a list of the culprits, I am sure this august journal will provide. Suffice to say, in the middle there were a couple of wines, nay three sir, or four. Some, anyway. As I was saying, in the midst of all that there were wines which I will never forget, but damned if I'll tell you what they were. To talk of such intimate things is an invasion of privacy.

*Keith Stewart, a man known to succumb to pinot and other passions, also writes for The Listener.*

## BIG SPENDERS

Americans certainly have a no-holds-barred approach to fundraising. Take the recent Californian Culinary Evening for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation which raised US\$840,000.

Thirty of America's top chefs and 47 winemakers collaborated in a remarkable night of wine and food held at the Paramount film studios. Cloudy Bay donated a winery visit and tasting for the auction and Kevin Judd was there to witness its sale.



---

## MUSTS

**NZ Wine Tourism Conference**  
21 - 23 November, 2000  
Marlborough

Details: PO Box 29, Marlborough  
PH: 03 577 5521 FAX: 03 577 5530  
email: dest.marlborough@xtra.co.nz

**Pinot Noir 2001**  
25 - 28 January, 2001

Wellington  
PH: 04 385 1458 FAX: 04 385 1498  
email: mail@verve.co.nz

**Wine Marlborough Festival 2001**  
Saturday 10 February, 2001  
Brancott Estate, Blenheim  
Details: www.wine-marlborough.co.nz



# In The Mood

Rose Gilder believes wine critics focus too much on the senses.

There's something about wine. Something the critics largely seem to have overlooked and it's time to address the issue. Maybe it'll even take a bit of undue pressure off our winemakers in the process.

When evaluating a wine, most of the emphasis is on the actual flavour of the stuff. There's also a healthy regard for how it smells, and even a little concern as to how it looks in the glass. Wine judges generally give these three attributes ratings out of 10, 7 and 3 respectively, and then add up the outcome to a total of 20.

But is that really all there is?

Just as music cannot simply be broken down into notes, voices and instrumental skill, wine is very much more than the sum of its parts. What seems to have been sadly neglected by so many is how a wine can make us feel – and I'm not talking intoxication.

Wine is a mood drink. The very sound of a champagne cork being popped on a sunny balcony can change the atmosphere, can bring gladness and a spark of joy to the world.

Wine can create a mood, enhance a mood, or even be totally inappropriate for a prevailing mood. Some wines are happy and non-threatening; others are brooding and serious. Just as Glenn Miller's band can have you dancing on the tables, and a Leonard Cohen tune can spark a two-hour call to Lifeline.

Wines can have a distinct effect on the human spirit. What's more, we can have an effect on them. Many of us have had the experience of sharing a wine which we think is fantastic, only for it to be picked to shreds by the people beside us. Suddenly the Coonawarra cabernet doesn't taste so good anymore!

Emotion can play a critical role in wine evaluation but for the most part it is overlooked. Oenology students at Australia's Roseworthy College swirl and sniff their coffees or cordials, so ingrained in their behaviour is the Look-Smell-Sip mentality.

But nothing is ever taught about mood.

Expensive wines, in my opinion, are at their best when shared with people who appreciate expensive wines. The flavour is somehow deeper, and the moment becomes special. Conversely, a cold bottle of bargain bubbly, popped just for the hell of it at 2am while sitting in bed watching a live telecast of a West Indies test match, can be just as enjoyable as Dom.

A star-filled night in the Gippsland mountains drinking '76 Limestone Ridge out of chipped enamel pannikins remains one of my most sensuous and rewarding wine experiences.



My friend had driven down from Sydney to escape the rat-race and we'd spent all afternoon chain-sawing fallen trees and stacking them high on top of a rotting cow's carcass.

So impressive was our bonfire that we decided to return that night with a few chops and tin-foiled spuds. She nonchalantly pulled a bottle out of her bag and tossed it into the back of the ute, among the dogs, plates and tomato sauce, the label obscured by darkness. I still remember it as one of the finest food and wine combinations I've ever tasted – and it definitely had more to do with the atmosphere than the shape or cleanliness of the glass!

Another memorable occasion was a birthday lunch in the Barossa – a long verandah table filled with a chaotic gathering of winemakers, truck-drivers, quarry workers, spouses and children. A scene as hearty and boisterous as any Provençal family celebration.

*‘Wines can have a distinct effect on the human spirit.’*

It was a delight to watch a senior winemaker scrounge up a couple of Fowlers Vacola jars to use as decanters for his museum reds. These were the sorts of wines that some would knock

down their grandmother to get at, and yet the unpretentiousness with which they were plonked on the table summed up what wine is really about.

It's sharing and enjoying, and having an appreciation of the environment in which you are drinking. And it doesn't just hold for wine.

You could waft as many glasses of Penfold's Yattarna or Petaluma Tiers chardonnay around as you liked while shucking fresh abalone, but I've yet to find anything that can beat a stubby of Coopers Stout after a splash in the Southern Ocean.

It's all to do with the atmosphere around us, and the attitude within. Our perceptions alter with the environment and our senses can be directly affected.

The wine that tasted rich and velvety at a winter dinner party could be like vinegar the day your wife announces she's leaving. Heavily stressed or depressed people can temporarily lose a significant part of their ability to taste and smell. Numbness sets in and overrides the ability to enjoy even the strongest flavours. No wonder so much energy goes into keeping critics happy!

There is no foolproof way of judging wines. Remember the 10-7-3 method is merely a guideline. So, be your own critic and be sure to include the mood!

*Rose Gilder was an entrant in Australia's Mark Shield wine writing competition and is a graduate of Roseworthy where she studied wine marketing.*



# Hedonism Rules OK

*Wellington plans to widen your horizons...*

You don't have to be a Freudian psychologist to analyse the psyche of the world's major cities – or the parties they throw.

Rio is the exhibitionist, baring all at Carnival, while Sydney is the narcissist, especially during the month of Mardi Gras. London is the passive aggressive – all that stiff-lip pomp and ceremony, sabres, braid and busbies; and Pamplona the repetitive compulsive. Where else would bulls be allowed to run amok year-in-year-out?

So where does that leave Wellington? Shy and retiring – a city that prides itself on its demure, non-confrontational behaviour, a city of conformists. (Flamboyant yachties need not apply.)

That's what you think! No, Wellington is definitely the hedonist. What other world city would devote four entire days to celebrate a grape!

Come January next year, Wellington will host **Pinot Noir New Zealand 2001** – an all-stops-out celebration of arguably the most seductive grape variety of all.

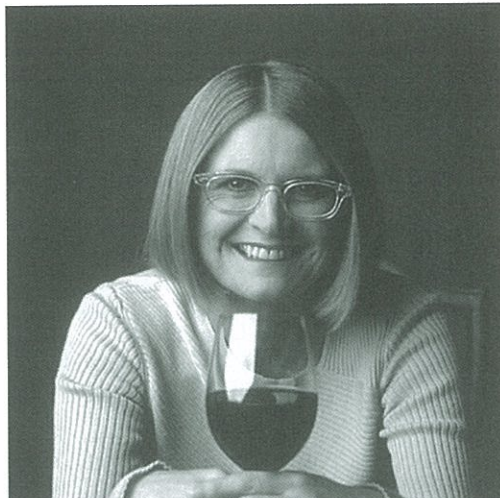
It's the idea of New Zealand's pinot noir producers, one-eyed obsessives like Cloudy Bay's James Healy and Ata Rangi's Phyll Pattie who happen to believe that there is only one true path – and it leads exclusively to a bevy of luscious, ripe, beguiling, garnet, velvety smooth beauties – all called Pinot Noir.

*‘Pinot Noir 2001 is four days of 100% pure indulgence.’*

Pinot Noir 2001 (25-28 January) is a consumer focused celebration which will feature international experts including Jancis Robinson, Robert Drouhin and Australia's James Halliday; the world's top pinot makers – Jim Clendenen (Au Bon Climat), David Graves (Saintsbury), Gary Farr (Bannockburn) and Tim Knapstein – and the world's best pinots.

The program includes comparative tastings, vineyard lunches smack bang in the centre of the city, an exhibition of New Zealand pinot noirs from over 60 wineries, and an innovative culinary program, overseen by Wellington caterer Ruth Pretty which appropriately includes sensory sessions on truffles and cheese.

Serious hedonists won't want to miss the Chef's Choice dinner – when Wellington's best cooks will match their skills with a raft of selected pinots, or 'Cordon Blair' the ultimate street party when Blair Street's 20 restaurants will collaborate to offer a grazing menu, fuelled of course, entirely by pinot noir.



*Chief hedonist Jancis Robinson MW can't wait to get to Wellington's pinot party.*

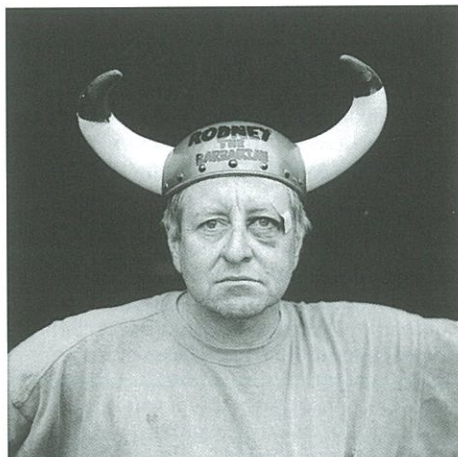
The celebration culminates on Saturday night in the Civic Square when New Zealand's leading chefs will 'do dinner' matched with a wine auction, art show and dancing. Recuperation services – a progressive vineyard picnic – will be offered on Sunday by the vignerons of Martinborough.

The brave can also register for pre- and post-conference wine region tours (including Marlborough, Central Otago and Waipara), just to check out the origins of this unadulterated Kiwi passion for pinot.

All budding hedonists (and others suffering pinot envy) can seek treatment by contacting organisers, Verve Consulting: PH: 04 385 1458 FAX: 04 385 1498 or [www.pinotnoir2001.co.nz](http://www.pinotnoir2001.co.nz)

## VIKING WARRIOR

Vintage management has its moments. Just ask James Healy, Cloudy Bay's oenologist. He reckons it's like steering a ship through stormy waters. Sometimes it gets really rough and if you're unlucky you get whacked in the eye and have to don the 'Rodney' hat as dunce of the day. Despite the mishap, James reports *SS Cloudy Bay 2000* docked safely. There were no vikings aboard.



## CAPITAL DINING

You don't have to wait till January 2001 to experience another of Wellington's pleasures – a meal at The Woodward. Talented young chef Layton Sanders has quietly been cooking up quite a reputation for his innovative yet classically based cooking.

A protege of The White House, Layton dishes up what he describes as 'honest dining redefined'. That translates to such nurturing compositions as braised duck leg on a creamy chickpea garlic puree with manuka smoked bacon, and spice-coated salmon dished with gratin potatoes.

Layton also takes pride in pairing his food with wine. When asked for a match for *Te Koko* he chose plump Bluff oysters topped with a complementary Asian-style pickled melon coriander salsa. It certainly appealed to Wellington critic David Burton who highlighted the pair in a recent review, and scored The Woodward a consistent 4 stars – for food, service, ambience and wine. *The Woodward, 11 Woodward Street, Wellington. PH: 04 4473 4474.*



*Layton Sanders makes his mark.*

## TIMOR TIPPLE

Tragically ravaged East Timor is slowly on the mend. But according to MN's correspondent, Rick Brook, seconded to the UN force from his home in Perth, it will be years before the community fully recovers from the recent upheavals.

However, Brook is cheered by the indomitable Timorese spirit – which he claims is especially evident in Dili's cafes. A lively clutch have sprung up to cater to the UN and other support teams,

offering good food and some other surprises. Brook had thought to pack a bottle of ambassadorial CMV Zin, but discovered the D.I Cafe's secret weapon – chilled Cloudy Bay!

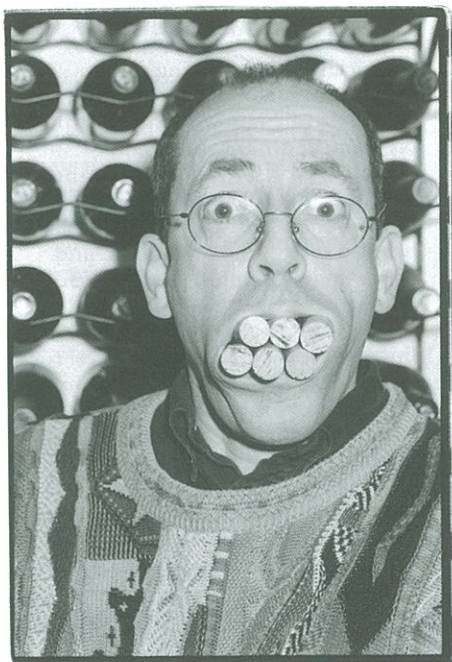


*Lena Sanches dispatches the rations at Dili's D.I Cafe.*



# Mentelle as Anything

by Morris Gleitzman



Morris Gleitzman swallowing cork, an old Burgundian custom.

As you might expect, I've kept a careful eye on the snaps you've been publishing from other Mentelle Ambassadors. Without wishing to seem big-headed, none of them come close to that pic of me in Johannesburg. For sheer ambassadorial impact, how could you top the stirring sight of an Australian with a bottle of *Trinders* talking to a large group of passers-by from all the major racial and cultural groups about the virtues of blending. I only wish I'd had the chance to get more shots, but I didn't because immediately I'd taken it, the crowd started beating me with sticks and burning my car. I still don't understand what they've got against merlot.

I'm beginning to wonder how much longer I can keep up my diplomatic energy without any recognition whatsoever.

Well alright, I admit I've had a little bit of recognition. When I parachuted into that Tibetan monastery with the bottle of Cloudy Bay between my teeth, those monks did seem to recognise me quite quickly. In fact, I'm pretty sure they had that fire hose out waiting for me.

But no recognition from you, dear editor, not even when I sent you that brilliant photo of me being the first person to carry the Olympic torch at the lighting of the flame ceremony in Greece. OK, it wasn't the exact Olympic torch, but the crowd were very understanding when I explained how, after all the controversy and bad feeling about the torch, the Australian people had decided to ditch it and carry a bottle of *Cape Mentelle Shiraz* instead. I just wish the Greek police and army had been as understanding. It was a top photo and I reckon you should have used it even though the cell bars did obscure the label a bit.

*'It took ages to pose that shot, particularly balancing the Pelorus bottle on my head.'*

I've decided to give you one last chance, dear editor. The enclosed photo was taken in the cellars of one of Burgundy's most revered first-growth wine producers. I'd just explained to some local winemakers, shippers and sommeliers about me being a Mentelle Ambassador and how, because of my diplomatic immunity, I shouldn't have been given a parking ticket even if I was in the spot where trucks pull up to tip grapes into the crusher.

They listened carefully. Then, halfway through me telling them how the best New Zealand wineries are able to achieve superb quality pinot and an adequate number of visitor parking spots, they suddenly bestowed upon me an ancient burgundian ritual of wine brotherhood involving a large number of old corks. I was so moved I was speechless.

Print the enclosed photo, dear editor, and I'll continue my tireless work as a Mentelle Ambassador. Ignore it, and I'm going straight over to Jack Daniels to offer my services as a groovy night-owl who spends the wee hours sprawled on the floor playing funky instruments. OK, I can't play guitar or sax, but I can do a mean *Greensleaves* blowing into an empty *Cloudy Bay Chardonnay* bottle.

*Morris Gleitzman is an Australian childrens' book author and a regular MN contributor. He's now been made an honorary lifetime Mentelle Ambassador and will be leaving for Fiji and the Solomons soon.*

## PHILLIPPA'S PORK & PULSES

Expat Kiwi chef Phillippa Grogan, proprietor of Melbourne's renowned sourdough bakery and cafe bearing her name, is fascinated by yeasts, especially wild ones. So it's no wonder she was keen to try a bottle of *Te Koko*, Cloudy Bay's wild yeast vinous equivalent.

The afternoon with the 'wild one' inspired Phillippa to recommend the following recipe – crispy roast pork with a Puy lentil, spinach and fetta salad, an unusual but delicious match with *Te Koko*. Try it!

### Puy Lentil Salad

1 medium onion, diced  
250g Puy lentils  
cultured butter for sautéing  
1 1/2 cups good stock  
1 1/2 cups verjuice  
(or apple juice with 1tbsp lemon juice)  
1 medium carrot, diced  
2 sticks celery, diced  
500g baby spinach, washed  
1 bouquet garni  
200g fetta, tossed in olive oil  
12 cherry tomatoes, halved  
2 tbsps red wine vinegar

### Method

Sauté onion, carrot and celery in butter till transparent. Add lentils and coat with butter (as with risotto). Add liquids and bouquet garni, bring to the boil and then simmer 30 minutes. Once lentils are tender remove from heat, place in a large bowl and toss through washed spinach while still warm to wilt spinach. Just before serving, crumble cheese and mix with tomatoes in a separate bowl. Serve lentils with a spoonful of cheese and tomato mix on top. (Can also be served cold in summer.)



Dear Editor,

I wish to register a formal complaint. Over the past two years I've sent you a large number of photographs showing the international diplomatic activities of one of your hardest working Mentelle Ambassadors (me) and you've failed to publish a single one.

I don't get it. The shots were all in focus, they were well lit and not a single one of them had a thumb or a corkscrew in front of the lens. My chemist reckons they were the cleanest, sharpest ambassadorial snaps he's ever seen and he was particularly impressed that none of them had any of your competitors' products in shot.

So, dear editor, I'm hurt and upset. Take, for example, that photo I sent of me in Washington DC with a bottle of *Pelorus*. Given the international status of Washington's diplomatic terroir, I'd have thought you'd have welcomed my photo, specially as the young lady I was standing next to at the cocktail party was one of the White House's brightest young interns, Monica Lewinsky. It took ages to pose that shot, particularly balancing the *Pelorus* bottle on my head. Monica was very patient, even when the bottle kept slipping off and falling into the sour-cream dip and splashing her blue dress.

I'm equally perplexed as to why you didn't use the shot I submitted of me in Calcutta with the Australian and Indian test cricket teams and the bottle of *Cape Mentelle Cabernet*. Again, I went to a lot of trouble to get that shot.

It's not easy, looking ambassadorial while you're running across the pitch in the last over of a match waving a wine bottle. Particularly when local bookmakers are throwing things at you. Some of those envelopes of money can give you a nasty nick. I wish I'd left my clothes on now.



# Underground Seller

Meet Peter Taylor, one of New Zealand's largest independent wine merchants.

If you're lucky, one day you'll sit next to larrikin Peter Taylor at a dinner and he'll tell you some stories. About Iron Men, tunnels and how he got into the wine business.

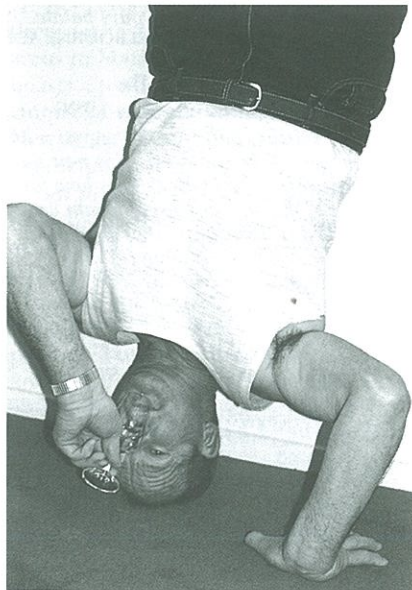
Actually the tunnels came first. Peter was employed in the seventies on the Lake Manapouri hydro scheme as a tunneller. He dug alongside immigrant European men, many of whom had worked on Australia's Snowy Mountains scheme. They were tough characters who knew how to spend their savings on leave trips to Christchurch. They also knew what to drink and introduced Peter to the delights of Champagne, and Italian and Spanish red wines.

'Those guys knew how to party, but they got me interested in wine,' admits Taylor who'll happily regale you with tall tunnellers' tales.

Nearly 20 years ago, after stints as a milk vendor, sawmiller and fishing lodge host, Peter arrived in Taupo, a man with a mission to create a remarkable wine cellar. It started small, and gradually carton upon carton of desirable new wines from around the world arrived to create Scenic Cellars. Taylor has had to expand the premises five times since 1981 to accommodate his collection, which he reckons is now worth about \$2 million.

The conventional approach would be to buy the shop next door, or build out the back but that's not the Taylor way. No indeed, cellars need to be cool, slightly humid and underground, so Peter refreshed his tunnelling skills and 'burrowed' a 280 square metre extension.

For wine lovers it's as much an attraction as Lake Taupo and its 14 million trout. Trawl the shelves and you'll likely find some rare gems, or a wine to match your catch. Taylor, who was one of Cloudy Bay's first supporters, suggests sauvignon blanc



Contortionist Peter Taylor of Taupo.



Tunneller Peter Taylor of Taupo.

with simple baked trout or aged chardonnay if the fish is smoked.

But that's not what he'd choose when a bad earthquake hits. No, a big shake would make him grab the d'Yquem, the Romanée-Contis and the Victorian Muscats.

That's quite an admission for Taylor whose passion for wine is palpable and without an ounce of pretension.

'Wine is just wine,' he muses, 'but a glass of bubbly does make you feel good.'

And if you ever do find yourself in Taylor's company after you've both had a couple, ask him to re-enact the photo below. Before you can say cheers, the man who admits a weakness for women's arms (especially those firmed at the gym) will be standing on his head drinking. Pictures never lie!

Scenic Cellars, 32 Roberts Street, Taupo  
PH: 07 378 5704 or [www.scenic.co.nz](http://www.scenic.co.nz)

## SANTA'S SACK

Every festive season Santa packs his special Cloudy Bay sack, a great fuss-free gift service for your wine-loving friends and family, and others who have been good all year. Santa's six-pack features two bottles of sparkling Pelorus (Vintage 1996 and NV), comparison bottles of Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc and Te Koko, a Western Australian red devil – the Cape Mentelle Cabernet Merlot 1998 and a little sweetie, the Late Harvest Riesling 1999.

Santa's thoughtful selection is just \$172.10 and is designed to complement most Christmas dinners. Greet the family with bubbles, pair the Sauvignons with seafood starters (sea urchin roe is an unexpected and great briny match with Te Koko), the rich berry Cab Merlot with the slow-roast turkey, and lip-smacking botrytised Riesling with the traditional pudding.

Orders will be sleighed to your door provided your mail reaches Santa's HQ by 30 November.

## CELLAR RAT

Dearest Mentelles,

G'day! Welcome to the new millennium, the age of the Rat's great awakening. Enlightenment sometimes dawns slowly, but I've finally discovered one of the great things about working in the wine industry.

There must be many I hear you say, and frankly you're right. But what the Rat holds especially dear is a thing called 'perks.'

Now, perks come in many forms. And there's something for everyone...

Fishing in the Marlborough Sounds, pinot seminars in Oregon, one-day cricket matches, judging at the Los Angeles County Wine Fair, evening cruises on the Opaawa river, golf games with wine writers, or just swapping a few bottles of Sauvignon Blanc for a few fresh crayfish at the golf club.

Oh yeah, that reminds me, keep those company branded golf balls coming in. Eventually I'll sort out my hook.

Now, one man's perk is another man's nightmare. The other day the Rat perked a lunch and amber catered bus trip to the NZ vs South Africa rugby test. Being a rugby fan, the Rat thought this was heaven, definitely my kind of perk.

But it wouldn't have pleased James Healy. He'd rather watch a Welsh tenor perform for 80 minutes (plus injury time), have a tasting of the world's greatest pinots at half time, followed by a meal that he could talk about for the next six months.

Mention rugby to Kevin and you'd get the raised one-eyebrow look of bewilderment. Being an Adelaide boy, the finer points of rugby are a bit lost on Kev. He was brought up on Aussie Rules.

Maybe if he was sitting beside Herb Ritz, Ansell Adams and Annie Liebowitz he could fill in 80 minutes talking about light and cameras. What a shame Robert Maplethorpe's dead, I'd love his interpretation of a rugby match.

Whereas Winston, being arty-farty, would only go to see the All Blacks playing England (black and white) – as long as it had sub-titles.

A Friday afternoon cruising the Sounds, winning and dining German agents might sound like a perk. And you'd be right, if the Rat hadn't perked a day-night cricket match the previous day and spent till 4am extolling the greatness of the Australian team.

As I leapt from my plane onto the boat everyone chorused, 'perk up', but alas I was perked out. My sea legs were in my other trousers.

Of course, perks come with a few downsides. Sitting in a van with a dozen drunken winemakers for four hours, or bobbing around in the ocean with the mother of all hangovers is not too bad a cross to bear. But throwing a game of golf with a wine writer when you think you're going to perk some Bledisloe Cup tickets, well, hell, it's bloody hard work. I mean, how many six-inch putts do you want me to miss?

Minister for lurks and perks, that's me. But I do have some dignity. (Well, just enough to know what it's worth. Did I hear a bid?)

Love, light and a nice entertainment tax right-off to you all,

PS: Remember, golf and sex are the only two things in the world that you can do badly and still enjoy.

Gerald

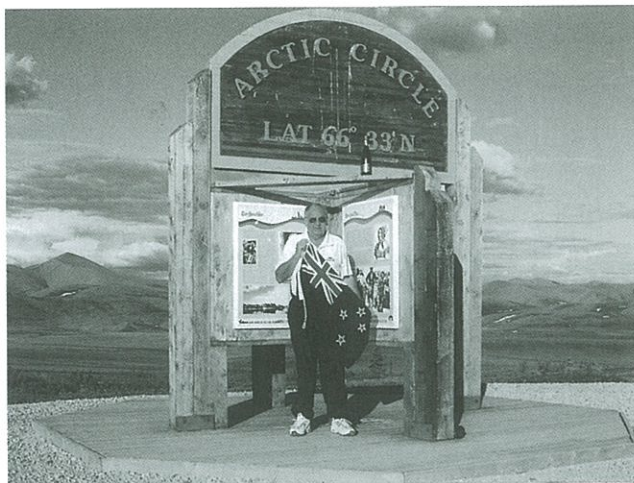


# Cold Power

Mentelle Ambassadors continue to trek to some of the world's most remote regions in an attempt to secure MN diplomatic accreditation (and that winning case of wine!)

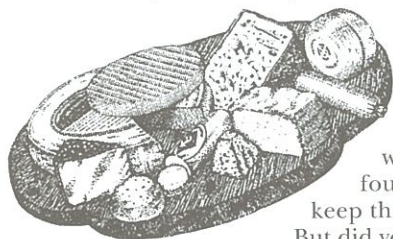
The latest valiant adventurers are Eunice and Warren Thessman from Eastbourne, Wellington, who travelled by 4WD up the Dempster Highway through the Yukon right to the Canadian Arctic Circle (latitude 66° 33'N) clutching their bottle of Pelorus. They chilled it in glacial ice then popped the cork at midnight on 21 June, the northern hemisphere's longest day of the year.

If you too wish to be part of CBV's export effort, keep your eyes peeled. Next time you're in some far-flung corner of the globe and spot a bottle of Cloudy Bay (or Cape Mentelle) – in a tapas bar in Torremolinos, noodle shop in Nanjing or sushi bar in Seoul, buy it and take a photo.



Warren Thessman waves the flag in the bright Arctic midnight sun. Spot the Pelorus bottle!

Then send it to The Editor, Mentelle Notes. Taking a bottle with you is also highly commended and encouraged. MN will publish the best and most alluring photo and the winning Mentelle Ambassador will receive a FREE mixed case of CBV wine. All entrants receive a CB T-shirt.



## CHEESY GRINS

MN likes to keep readers up with the latest imbibing-led scientific discoveries, especially those which benefit health. We all know to drink at least four good glasses of our favourite red tippie a day to keep the doctor away.

But did you know that you can now match the vinous medicine with cheese? According to the Australian Dental Association, cheese prevents tooth decay. They maintain chewing cheese stimulates saliva and its alkalinity protects against plaque acids. What's more, the protein, calcium and phosphorous help reduce bacteria levels and demineralisation, the first stage of decay. So get your chompers into a slab of creamy brie or ewe's milk pecorino soon!

## ANGEL FOOD

Some MN ambassadors are unwitting. Take Will Alsop, Professor of Architecture at Vienna Technical University, who also dabbles in food writing. In a recent article (published in *Food Design and Culture*) he recounts a picnic on the banks of the river Eden in New South Wales, a place of forbidden pleasures.

It comprised a crusty white loaf from the village baker, freshly shucked briny oysters prised from the rocks – and a bottle of *Cloudy Bay*, procured from the local bottle shop. 'The experience of being alone in beautiful surroundings with all the accoutrements of sensory pleasure generates a rich memory which feeds your imagination until you die.' Amen.

## OOOPS!

We omitted to mention in last MN that crossword puzzler Robert Neale of Palmerston North provided the only correct entry! He reckons his prize will provide considerable mental stimulation.

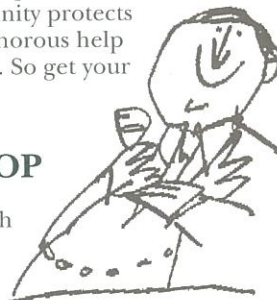
## LANGE'S DROP

This special despatch comes courtesy of eagle-eyed Cloudy Bay fan, Wendy Glover of the Wairau Hospital, Blenheim. She was browsing *The Australian* newspaper and found reference to a visit to Sydney by David Lange which coincided with the arrest of Fijian coup leader, George Speight.

The ex-PM's take on the political situation included several provocative remarks deemed by the reporter to be 'bon mots that flowed like a fine Cloudy Bay wine.' Glad to know that Marlborough's mountain drop provides such political inspiration.

## WINE CALENDAR

Need Christmas gift ideas for wine loving friends? Well, consider the *Colour of Wine Calendar*, Kevin Judd's latest photographic gesture, packed with dramatic images of New Zealand's heralded vineyards. (Available from bookshops and the winery.)



**Cloudy Bay Chardonnay 1998**  
'Fine yet concentrated grapefruit citrus, hazelnut and mealy flavours with a great texture and good length. Predictably impressive chardonnay from Marlborough's leading winery.'  
91 points, Bob Campbell, CUISINE

'Lip-smacking Kiwi chardonnay from the masters of Marlborough...Gorgeous wine.'  
Huon Hooke, SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

**Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc 1999**  
'Has all the hallmark flavours but complexity in spades. The fruit is bursting at the seams but is skilfully restrained and orchestrated to unravel layer by layer across the palate.'  
Nick Bryant, NATIONAL BUSINESS REVIEW

'...the lovely weighty, zingy, punchy 1999 from Cloudy Bay. Yes, you do pay extra for this icon, but as always the reputation of the label is backed up by the contents of the bottle.'  
David Burton, EVENING POST

'Cloudy Bay still holds the high ground. Packed with grassy varietal character, and is long flavoured yet delicate and steely. Has genuine structure and a clean finish which encourages that second glass.'  
Highly Recommended, WINEWISE, AUSTRALIA

**'Cloudy Bay Te Koko 1996**  
'Te Koko succeeds magnificently. It is a mouth-filling meal in a glass that is closer to chardonnay than sauvignon blanc.'  
Bob Campbell, INDEPENDENT

'Cloudy Bay threw away the sauvignon blanc rule book to make this stunning wine. A totally different style... it's simply luscious.'  
Karl du Fresne, NZ HOUSE & GARDEN

**Pelorus 1995**  
'One of the most richly elegant sparkling wines on the planet. The pastry-edged fruit is outstanding and has to be compared with absurdities such as Krug...'  
Malcolm Gluck, GUARDIAN WEEKEND, UK

**Pelorus NV**  
'A mature big style with a rich, dry palate and oodles of character.'  
Huon Hooke, SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

**Cloudy Bay Pinot Noir 1998**  
'What a triumph! New Zealand's Cloudy Bay gang have really worked hard on pinot. This is a big, fairly tannic, seriously structured Burgundy style with sweet plum aromas...and a long, savoury palate.'  
\*\*\*\*\* 5 Stars, UNCORKED, MELBOURNE AGE

**Cape Mentelle Cabernet Sauvignon 1996**  
'Cape Mentelle continues to progress with its cabernet sauvignon which is now one of Australia's best reds. Shows how far David Hohnen and John Durham have travelled in their pursuit of excellence. It's a savoury, complex long-finishing wine which shows the structure and flavour advantages of extended maceration. The oak is perfectly handled. Who needs Bordeaux?'  
Outstanding, WINEWISE, AUSTRALIA

## MENTELLE NOTES

is the free publication of CLOUDY BAY & CAPE MENTELLE VINEYARDS  
For further information please contact the winery  
PO Box 376, Blenheim, Marlborough  
Tel (03) 520 9140 Fax (03) 520 9040  
email: info@cloudybay.co.nz  
web: www.cloudybay.co.nz



# *A View from the Vineyard*



*Pelorus Disgorgers, 2000.*

*‘Let us have wine and women, mirth and laughter,  
Sermons and soda-water the day after.’*

LORD BYRON





PRICE LIST & ORDER FORM

OCTOBER • 2000



Table with 6 columns: Wine, Description, Price per Case, Price per Bottle, Amount Ordered, Cost. Rows include Pelorus 1996, Pelorus NV, Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc 2000, etc.



SEND THEM MENTELLE IN THE UK

If you would like to surprise family and friends this Christmas why not send them a gift case of Cloudy Bay wine. The following selection is available for delivery from our London warehouse.

Table with 3 columns: Wine, Price per Case Delivered in UK, Amount Ordered. Includes a Total \$ box and address fields for UK delivery.

Table with 2 columns: Description (ADD NZ FREIGHT COSTS \$6 PER CASE), Amount Ordered (TOTAL INCLUDING GST).

Customer information fields: Name (Mr/Mrs/Ms), Address, Postcode, Tel, Fax, Is this your first order of Cloudy Bay wines? Signature.

DELIVERY INSTRUCTIONS

Delivery Address: Note any special delivery instructions below: Delivery Address:

- PLEASE NOTE 1. Orders must be in full or half case lots. 2. Feel free to make up your own mixed case using the bottle prices listed. 3. All prices are G.S.T. inclusive. 4. Send order with payment to Cloudy Bay Vineyards Ltd, P.O. Box 376 Blenheim, New Zealand or Facsimile (03) 520 9040.

REMITTANCE DETAILS: Cheque, Bankcard, Visacard, Mastercard, American Express, Diners. Credit Card Number, Valid until.

SIGN UP WE'LL SEND YOU MENTELLE

Form for signing up to receive a free copy of Mentelle Notes. Fields for Name, Address, Postcode, Tel, Fax, Email.

Cellar Door Opening Times

Monday to Sunday - 10:00am - 4:30pm (except Good Friday & Christmas Day) It would be appreciated if groups would make a prior appointment.



Cloudy Bay Vineyards Limited P. O. Box 376 • Blenheim • Marlborough • New Zealand Tel: (03) 520 9140 • Fax: (03) 520 9040 email: info@cloudybay.co.nz • web: www.cloudybay.co.nz