

MENTELLE NOTES

THE NEWSLETTER OF CLOUDY BAY AND CAPE MENTELLE

French Lessons

John Saker takes an all too brief study of the roots of relations vinicoles Franco-Kiwi.

Searching for the origins of New Zealand wine's French connections is like tracing the Nile to its source. Way, way upstream you come to a fork.

At this juncture of the wine journey you take the stream marked 'Edinburgh, this way'. Don't look blank. As you'll soon see my Tartan Nile theory is perfectly logical and historically sound.

I'm in full agreement with historian Professor Jamie Belich that the pakeha New Zealand mindset and culture owe a far greater debt to Scotland than England (or anywhere else). The only time the Edinburgh Tattoo ever left home, where did it go?

As for our famous number eight fencing wire mentality – where did all the great British inventors come from? And why are we Kiwis all too tight to heat our homes properly?

I think our love of wine, while it may have lain dormant here in the New World for some time, also came via the Scots. Not by accident does New Zealand have significant winemakers with names like McCallum and McKenna, and leading wine writers with names like Campbell and Stewart. The supposedly dour, whisky-sodden Celts to the north have long had an appreciation of wine that arguably runs deeper than that of their English neighbours.

For centuries, vessels from Bordeaux (your patience has been rewarded, this is where the French come in) disgorged copious hogsheads of claret on to the Wine Quay of Leith near Edinburgh. From there they were rolled up to the nearby premises of the numerous Scottish wine merchants. Claret consumption actually grew to such alarming proportions throughout Scotland that in 1616 laws were introduced to ration each household's intake.

The English went into their tight clinch with claret around the time the Black Prince set up court in Bordeaux in the 14th century. The Scots were devotees well before this. In fact, the Auld Alliance, signed in 1295 between



Put a wee (oui) sparkle in your eyes!

Scotland and France, was as much about giving the Scots access to the best claret as it was about giving them an ally against English military stropiness.

In view of all of the above, I hereby declare the Auld Alliance to be the fountainhead of Franco-Kiwi wine relations.

'I hereby declare the Auld Alliance to be the fountain head of Franco-Kiwi wine relations.'

For the birth of direct vinous links between the two countries, we move to Aotearoa, circa 1840. Plantings, vintages, tastings...there was a concentrated flurry of firsts around the time.

The Lyonnais clergyman, Bishop Pompallier, became the first Frenchman to plant grapes in New Zealand, which he did soon after landing in Hokianga in 1838. By the early 1840s, small vineyards were flourishing at several Catholic missions in the far north, providing wine for mass and no doubt offering occasional solace to homesick young Gallic men of God.

A couple of years later the French settlers at Akaroa planted the South Island's first vineyards. Although there were reports of good wine issuing from these grapes, neither many of the Akaroa French, nor their wine proved to be stayers.

In the same year 1840, the Akaroa settlers made landfall, and we find a rather unhappy matelot, Dumont d'Urville, paying a visit to Edinburgh-born James Busby at Waitangi. (The Scots are still in the frame.)

The French explorer was having one of his worst weeks on tour. He was suffering stomach cramps, he'd just discovered the British had successfully peddled a treaty to Maori and claimed the entire North Island for Queen Victoria, and then he found Busby was not at home.

But d'Urville did get to meet up with a glass of wine made by Busby from the small vineyard he had planted between the treaty house and the flagstaff. It appeared to cheer the captain of the *Astrolabe* up no end.

That night in his diary d'Urville penned the first review of a New Zealand wine, not just by a Frenchman, but by any foreigner: 'I was given a light white wine, very sparkling and delicious to taste which I enjoyed very much. Judging from this sample I have no doubt vines will be grown extensively all over the sandy hills of these islands.'

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NEW RELEASES

SPRING BREAK

Spring traditionally heralds the new vintage release of New Zealand's international star – Sauvignon Blanc, the variety that unashamedly put Kiwi wine on the world wine map. Young and sassy, those leggy, head-turning, zippy refreshing wines are eagerly awaited every year – the powerful taste of bottled Spring and sunshine.

It's also a time for celebration (unless you're trying to sort out problematic balances of power), and what better way to slip into the Festive Season than with Cloudy Bay's latest selection? Here are five wines guaranteed to put sparkle, zip and zing into any occasion, so be sure to include them on the shopping list.

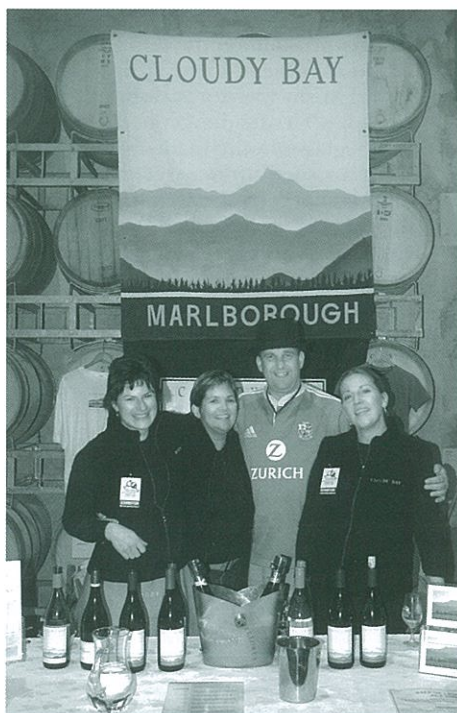
Pelorus Vintage 2001

'Brimming with aromas reminiscent of warm tarte tatin... caramelised butter, ripe red apples, and freshly whipped cream. Pelorus Vintage 2001 has a tight, richly textured palate enhanced by grapefruit and almond flavours with a flinty mineral character and delicate floral nuances. A generous flavoursome wine with an elegant, lingering finish.'



Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc 2005

'Pale straw green in colour and vibrantly aromatic, the Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc 2005 is like an exotic infusion of fresh ginger, sweet basil and lemongrass layered over ripe tropical and citrus fruits. With great purity of fruit flavours, the palate is mouth-wateringly juicy yet finishes with a refreshing crispness.'



Cloudy Bay crew befriend an invader.

Cloudy Bay Chardonnay 2003

'Delectable aromas of ripe stone fruit and orange blossom mingle with hints of white chocolate and freshly baked sponge cake. Flinty gun smoke characters derived from natural yeast fermentation add to the complexity of this savoury style. The full-bodied textural palate shows zesty citrus flavours, complemented by honey toasted nuts and cream, finishing with a slatey, mineral edge. Delicious drinking at release, the Cloudy Bay Chardonnay 2003 will evolve gracefully over the next four to six years.'

Cloudy Bay Gewurztraminer 2003

'Exotically fragrant with aromas of nougat, apricots and orange peel with a musky rosewater perfume. The richly concentrated and textural palate has flavours of macadamia, mandarin and quince. This is a wine with great length and a long, spicy finish.'

Cloudy Bay Pinot Noir 2003

'Seductive aromas of ripe cherries and black plums are supported by earthy notes of licorice and smoked hickory. The intensely varietal palate reveals layers of dark red fruits, savoury dried herbs, charry oak and silky tannins resting on a powerful, lithe frame. The Cloudy Bay Pinot Noir 2003 reflects positively the effects of a naturally low-cropping season and finishes with great length and depth of flavour.'

FRENCH LESSONS cont.

A wine relationship was thus established, but how relatively quiet and one-way the traffic was over the next 140 years. The French owned wine; we seemed only capable of pretending and dreaming. The vaguest compliment paid by a touring French rugbyman was enough to keep the dreams afloat for another year or so.

The compliments began to change as the wine began to change. Perhaps the most significant compliment so far is reflected in the fact this newsletter will be read at the headquarters of Veuve Clicquot. In that regard, you might be tempted to say the dear old French still own wine.

John Saker is a retired basketball player turned wine writer and author. His new book How to Drink a Glass of Wine is available from good bookstores and www.awapress.com

LIONS ROAR

Mondays are usually pretty quiet around Marlborough, but not one sunny morning when the valley was invaded by 2000 members of the 'Barmy Army'. For non-football fans, these very keen spectators are the migratory flock that follows their beloved Lions team around the world. Between matches (and the Lions would prefer to forget about their 2005 Kiwi encounters) the supporters seek out other pursuits.

So, what better diversion than a must-be-Monday all-day Wine Festival? Thirty Marlborough wine companies combined forces to pour their finest for the Army's wine lovers, hosted by Cloudy Bay. Two entire cellars were rearranged for the occasion that by all accounts made the Lions roar.

VINTAGE REPORT

It was a challenging year... Kevin Judd reports.

The 2005 season started well and early Spring conditions were settled with a couple of chilly mornings, but no frost damage – a huge relief. Especially as in the two previous seasons we tangoed with Jack Frost.

However, the weather during December and early January was unseasonably cold and cloudy with consistent, intermittent rainfall. This led to variable flowering and resulted in yields on the low side of average. The weather improved considerably during early January and for the rest of the summer fine and warm conditions prevailed. By the time harvest commenced the season had recorded enough warm sunny days to catch up with the long-term average heat summation levels, and boded well.

The sparkling wine grape harvest commenced under sunny skies, but an unwelcome cold spell produced a couple of inches of rain and had everyone sitting on the edge of their seats.

Chardonnay and pinot noir were harvested steadily during late March and early April and all vineyards were picked at optimum ripeness with great flavour and sugar/acid balance.

The sauvignon blanc commenced in the second week of April under settled conditions and continued throughout the month, finishing abruptly after a significant Anzac frost that affected most of the valley on 25 April. Despite that, all vineyards were picked at optimum ripeness with great concentration of fruit aromatics.



The big dipper, winemaker, Eveline Fraser.

DISTINGUISHED CONNECTION



Cloudy Bay has appointed a new national distributor – Distinguished Vineyards New Zealand (DVNZ), the fine wine distribution division of one of New Zealand's most prominent companies, Lion Nathan.

The DVNZ team, led by General Manager Jonathon Hesketh, took over the agency on 1 August, 2005. DVNZ will also handle national trade sales of Cape Mentelle, and other labels in the Moët Hennessy portfolio. Other New Zealand DVNZ clients include Mt Difficulty and Trinity Hill.

Trade inquiries should be directed to Michael Taylor PH: (09) 523 6694.

Pinot or Pudding?

Australian gastronaut Pat Nourse crossed the Tasman for the first time in his life for his Kiwi Pinot Noir initiation...

Hollywood has the People's Choice Awards, the Sydney art world's major annual competition, the Archibald, has the Packers' Prize, and for the increasingly impressive Pinot at Cloudy Bay Tasting, there's the steadfast barometer – the bottle-count at the Post-Tasting Lunch.

Arguments and appraisals, puff and provocation, pokes, prods and the occasional carefully reasoned point – all are raised over the serried ranks of ISO glasses during the Tasting.

And then there are the (perhaps) more considered addresses given between brackets, by the likes of Cloudy Bay's Kevin Judd and Eveline Fraser, and visiting pundits such as Australian wine scribe Ken Gargett and negotiant Randall Pollard. But, bugger it, the proof is unquestionably in the pudding.

The system is not without its flaws. The show-me-the-Grand-Cru factor, as it's known in the trade, means that the first bottles poured at the after-Tasting Lunch tend to be the most coveted rather than necessarily the best (though this might be a useful yardstick in any case), especially when many punters have parted with their hard-earned just to get a gander at them.

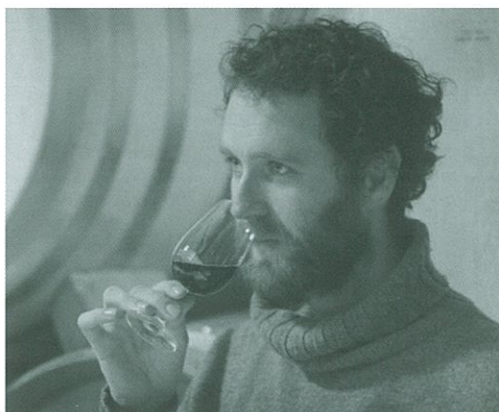
But I think you'll find yourself hard-pressed to show me a winemaker who is happy to see their bottles being the last ones standing on the trestle table. After all, there has to be some value in such a clear-cut determination of which bottles have the least appeal, both commercially and critically.

There has to be special sympathy reserved, too, much as we love our Steinlager after a hard day's tasting, for those winemakers whose work is appreciated by the crowd only after the last beer has left the building.

Yes, it was a fine day's tasting. For Cloudy Bay it was the culmination of many hours of long phone calls, research, customs wrangling and arduous wine drinking. For the group of visiting sommeliers, restaurateurs, retailers and journalists, it was the end result of a trip begun with a few uneventful hours over from Australia, followed by a short but thrillingly life-affirming trip across Cook Strait in a series of minibuses with wings. We're particularly impressed by the sang-froid of the Sydney retailer who had the pleasure of holding the door shut as 'the bus' did the trip.

The many rooms of the Hotel d'Urville, Blenheim's old Public Trust building, provided the staging ground for a weekend of erudite debate, not least of all those arguing the relative merits of the Caligula apartment over the Heidi Fleiss suite.

The pleasures of the Marlborough district filled the intervening hours between arrival and the Tasting proper. Sensualists to a man and, worryingly enough, the party was on the man-



Pat's first sip.

heavy side (our apologies to the people of Blenheim who may have suffered as a result), the group found equal stimulation in the hotly contested tank and barrel tastings of *Cloudy Bay's Sauvignon Blanc 2005*, *Te Koko 2004* (machine- and hand-harvests), pre-release *Te Koko 2003*, *Chardonnay 2004* and, to get those muscles limber, the *Cloudy Bay Pinot Noir 2004*, as they did touring the vineyards and cruising the Queen Charlotte Sound.

This latter experience was amplified hugely by the full force of Ken Gargett, in his full-beanied, cigar-toting glory, apparently normal clobber for a Marlborough Sounds luncheon cruise.

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‘To invite such a comparison between their own work and the world's best is confident and admirable.’

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Blenheim itself provided distraction in the form of d'Urville's restaurant (love the thar loin with creamed cabbage and boar bacon), the Spirit of d'Urville, the hotel's bar (love that whisky, well but perhaps not too wisely), the young chefs, waitresses and barmaids from said food-and-beverage outlets (whose names we have forgotten to protect the guilty), and the bizarre spectacle of Goats Don't Shave, the Market Street nightspot to which these aforementioned hospitality workers led our colleagues astray.

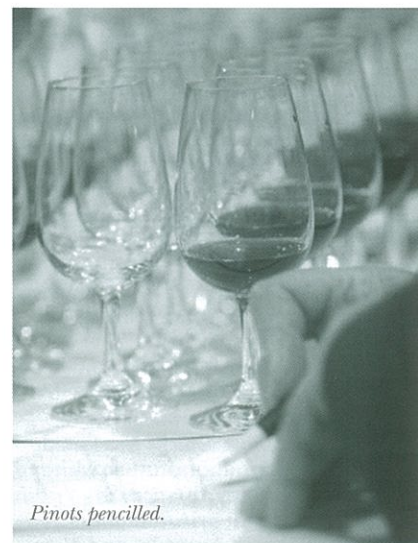
The less said about that last chapter the better. Some people laughed, of course, when the subject of marking the fellowship, Lord of the Rings-style, with matching portrait tattoos of Dr Tony Jordan and Kevin Judd on each arm was initially raised.

Two months down the track, I can only say they're wearing better with each passing day. If you flex your bicep you can even make 'Kevin' appear to make comments about how much he doesn't enjoy public speaking.

And so to the Tasting. The interesting generational division of opinion on the charms of North Canterbury's Alan McCorkindale Waipara Valley, the curve-balls thrown in the face of certain widely held assumptions regarding regionality (particularly with regard to the Californian and Oregon pinots), and the solid standing achieved by Cloudy Bay's own offering, despite a suspect bottle or two finding their way onto the tables – none of these hot topics of discussion seemed, ultimately, to have had that great an impact on what the punters went for over lunch.

The afternoon was all the more memorable for a vintage closing speech from Bob Campbell and Chris Fortune's exceptional chardonnay barrel-smoked Marlborough salmon with celeriac, salmon roe and lime oil. But Burgundy's Domaine Bocquenet Echézeaux and Domaine Jean Grivot Clos de Vougeot were the star attractions, followed closely by the Domaine Dugat-Py Gevrey-Chambertin 'Coeur de Roy', Domaine Michel Lafarge Volnay Vendanges Sélectionées, and the Domaine Mongeard-Mugneret Les Suchots.

California's Melville Estate Pinot Noir 'Carrie's' was next off the blocks, alongside Oregon's Bergström Winery Cumberland Reserve Pinot, with the remaining Americans (California's Williams Selyem Coastlands Vineyard and Oregon's Ken Wright Cellars McCrone Vineyard) vying with the Alan McCorkindale, Ata Rangi, Akarua and, interestingly, Cloudy Bay's entry for line honours.



Pinots pencilled.

Interest in the Australians was, with the possible exception of Tasmania's Frogmore Creek Reserve and Yabby Lake, tepid, prompting the expected grumbling from Aussies present regarding the selection, damned Kiwis and the like.

For New Zealand's leading wine company to invite such a comparison between their own work and the world's best is confident and admirable, not to mention great marketing. For them to do so in an environment so free of pretension and so rich with discussion and, dare we say it, laffs, does them enormous credit. Bravo Blenheim, bravo Cloudy Bay – and bring on the Tasting Table Trophy.

Pat Nourse is the Features Editor of Gourmet Traveller.

Alternative Thinking

Wine writer Sally Gudgeon examines the rise and rise of alternative grape varieties in Australia.

Two empty bottles sit on my desk. A lagrein from the Murray, and a rondinella corvina blend from the Hilltops region of New South Wales. For me, they epitomise everything that is exciting about Australia's alternative grape variety revolution. They are both exhilaratingly dry, with earthy tannins, and interesting, different flavours that marry perfectly with a range of foods.

It is a 'revolution', because alternative varieties have the potential to completely change the Australian wine scene. Heads won't roll and it's unlikely that red wine will flow down the gutters, although there may be some vine pulling and regrafting.

This is a slow, quiet, velvet-textured, savoury tannin revolution. It's led by a collective of ethnic minority grapes, which one day may challenge the dominance of the aristocratic French varieties, that have always ruled the Australian (and New Zealand) wine industries.

Too few, for too long, have governed the palates of too many. There are hundreds of grape varieties in Australia, yet the industry is heavily dependent on just eight – chardonnay, semillon, sauvignon blanc, riesling, shiraz, cabernet sauvignon, merlot, and pinot noir – which when one thinks about it is rather absurd, given the size of Australia, and its enormous regional and climatic diversity.

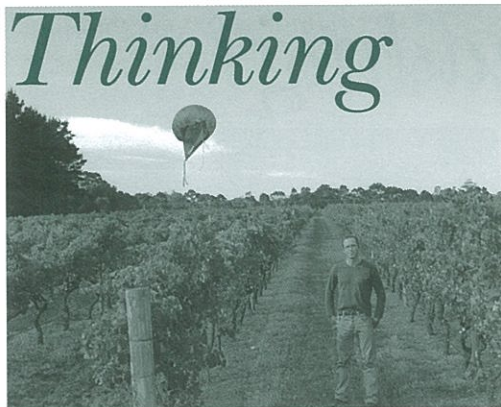
The list of ethnic pretenders is a long and exotic one. A few to look out for are alicante bouschet, aglianico, albarino, assyrtiko, biancone, barbera, carmenere, furmint, graciano, malvasia, marzemino, nero d'avola, ondenc, petit manseng, saperavi, sagrafino, schioppettino, taminga, tannat, touriga, vermentino and Waltham Cross. (No the latter isn't an apple.)

This is an impressive lexicon, but it seems that some insurgents are mustering quicker than others.

Ten years ago, *Mentelle Notes* made some predictions about future white varieties, foreseeing the rise of viognier and pinot gris. The latter is now so popular in Australia and New Zealand, it can no longer be regarded as a lateral variety.

Viognier too, is storming the Australian palate, both as a varietal and in red and white blends. This full-bodied Rhône Valley native has aromas of apricots, spice and honey, and it can produce opulent, silky, perfumed white wines. It has spawned myriad 'Rhône Ranger' imitations, making smart alliances with marsanne, roussanne and chardonnay. Co-fermented in small amounts with shiraz, it lifts the aroma and fleshes out the texture.

In another edition in the same year, *Mentelle Notes* looked into the future for red varieties. Sangiovese was given the strongest chance. Its only impediment to leading the Red Army



Cape Mentelle's alternative thinking vineyard manager Steve Meckiff in the original alternative block of zinfandel, with his alternative bird-scaver balloon.

has been the lack of availability of good clones. It could still head the charge however, now that Chalmers Nursery in Mildura has brought in some superior clonal material.

Apart from grenache, there was no mention of the Spaniards. And who could have foreseen tempranillo becoming so bullish? In terms of new hectares being planted, it is one of the fastest growing varieties in Australia. One of the reasons for its enormous popularity is its versatility. Tempranillo blends well with lots of different grapes including grenache, cabernet sauvignon, shiraz and merlot.

‘This is a slow, quiet, velvet-textured, savoury tannin revolution.’

One of its other appealing aspects is its savouriness, and broad flavour spectrum. A young, unoaked tempranillo has fresh vibrant strawberry, raspberry, blackberry, and cherry flavours. Oak and age add further layers of tobacco, spice, olives, and leather.

It was founder David Hohnen who nurtured the revolutionaries at Cape Mentelle, giving the thumbs up to plant both sangiovese and viognier.

If there is one winery, however, which has encouraged the ethnic minorities to rise up and be counted, more than any other, it is Brown Brothers in north-east Victoria, which processes over 50 different varieties every year.

Other noted seditionaries on the wanted list would have to include Garry Crittenden (Crittenden 'i' range) and Sandro Mosele (The Murray Darling Collection).

They are all dangerous radicals, whose wines should be approached with caution. Not only will you have to take classes in Italian, French, Greek, Spanish, German and Russian in order to pronounce the names of their wines, once you have tasted them, they may change your palate forever.

Drinkers of the classic varieties pay heed. You have nothing to lose apart from your tannin chains!

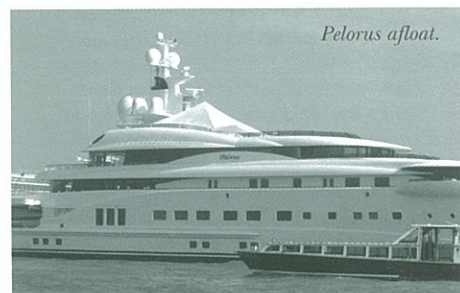
Sally Gudgeon was once a wine rep but swapped the order pad for a pen. Her column appears in Melbourne's Sunday Life.

WHITE ELEPHANT

Hannibal's lead elephant probably wouldn't have been surprised to spot the 115-metre super yacht *Pelorus*, one of the world's leading private mega-yachts, in Venice harbour, because it is one of the biggest of its kind, named after the navigational head of the herd. But it certainly attracted the attention of Tonia Home, Cape Mentelle's marketing manager.

The vessel is owned by Russian oligarch Roman Abramovich, listed by *Forbes* magazine as one of the world's wealthiest men with a reputed fortune of US\$13.3 billion, earned primarily from his ownership of Russian oil fields, and 26% of Aeroflot. He recently acquired the Chelsea Football Club.

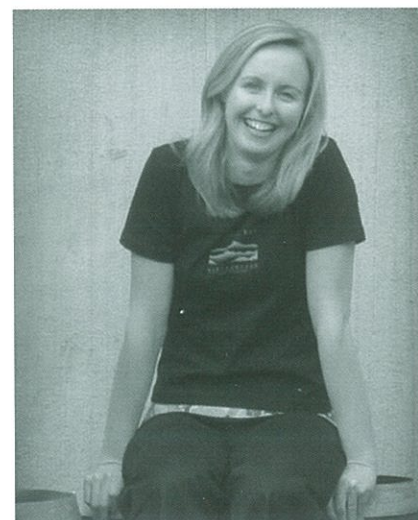
Pelorus, built in 2003, accommodates 18 guests and 40 crew and clips along at 20 knots. The marketing department just wonders what bubbly Mr Abramovich has stocked in his floating cellar, or if he's ever sailed in *Pelorus* Sound?



WATER INTO WINE

Meet Rachel Jackson, the new PR and Guest Relations Co-ordinator at Cloudy Bay. Originally trained as a hydrologist, Rachel decided in 2000 to move from water into wine, undertaking a post-graduate Oenology Diploma at Adelaide University. It's a decision she doesn't regret. Since joining the wine industry Rachel has worked as associate winemaker at Seresin, and in marketing and sales with Cairnbrae, Palliser and Martinborough Vineyard.

Her favourite variety has always been chardonnay and she is inclined to peddle notions of pick-me-up glasses of *Pelorus* for afternoon tea, while her colleagues sip Dilmah English Breakfast.



Kitchen Confidential

Siobán Harnett reports on a secret culinary mission.

Anthony Bourdain ruined my weekend. Possibly not deliberately, but he was effective. I would like this talent.

It started about a year ago when Kevin was preparing for a long-haul flight to the USA. This involved wordlessly and randomly marching in and out of the office on high rotation, typing frantically and occasionally muttering the tag-end of sentences to no one in particular. To the untrained eye it was nothing out of the ordinary, but here was a man out of sorts, a man in dread – a man who had no in-flight reading.

Foolishly, I offered to lend him a book. I thought he would really like it, as it had three things going for it – food, lots of cuss words, and it was short. He said nothing when I dropped it on his desk but it was clicked into the black briefcase and disappeared with him out the door.

I'd like to say Kevin returned raving about both the trip and the book, but remember, this article is not a work of fiction. This is all about how Anthony Bourdain ruined my weekend. Kevin eventually mentioned he'd read the book and really enjoyed it. I even got it back.

During the middle of harvest this year he pointed out I was to attend Savour. 'That cooking guy who wrote the book you loaned me will be there.'

Kevin thought it would be a great idea if I organised for Mr Bourdain to write a piece for *Mentelle Notes*.

Sure – on my ear. I couldn't see a problem with befriending a complete stranger, smooching up so well that he would churn out 1000 words for a bit of wine. Who wouldn't?

I showed up at the conference sleep-deprived from vintage and distracted about the upcoming duck dish co-presentation with Cheong Liew, matched with *Cloudy Bay Pinot Noir*.

Kevin called me on the cell-phone for a quick argument and before he rang off he reminded me about 'the piece from that cooking guy'. He was obviously determined. I was screwed. Really screwed.

My heart sank as I saw Bourdain stride into the room. He was ten feet tall and loped through the crowd like he was walking through a paddock of wheat. Stopping by a pillar, he inspected the crowd without moving a muscle. I knew what I was up against.

All my student life I had waited tables and this man was latched on to the kitchen of every restaurant. He's the one that ignores you while watching you. He's the one that surreptitiously stares over the top of the heat lamps, following your work and wiggling in on your sluttish conversations in the servery.



Take three eggs, beat vigorously, whip cream...Siobán polishes up her technique.

The one who stares through the doors catching slow-speed cartoon shots of the customers between door swings, and then to your amazement tells you what each table has ordered before you place it.

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'My heart sank as I saw Bourdain stride into the room.'

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He's the one that barks, 'What's going on out there?' and it takes you three months to work out exactly what he means. Replies such as 'They're eating' are not what he's after. He demands a tight synopsis of characters, mannerisms, moods, eating and drinking habits.

This was proving to be mission nearly impossible and I needed back-up.

The next morning Melbourne writer Ralph Kyte-Powell, doyenne Australian chef Stephanie Alexander and I stood on the covered walkway and watched Bourdain jaywalk through the Kilmore Street traffic in human Panavision. The collar of his denim jacket turned up to the Southerly and his head cocked at an angle to protect his cigarette from an otherwise certain, Antarctic death.

'Isn't it lovely to see someone like Anthony Bourdain come over to these things and just completely be himself?' chimed Stephanie in such a way I felt she would be the kind of aunt who, upon showing her your new tattoo would exclaim, 'My dear, that's very modern.' Bless her.

Watching him stride between cars I was fixed by the silhouette of his stove-pipe jeans. It must have cut deeply, as two weeks later I found myself in Pepe Jeans, Carnaby Street. Zipping myself into what felt an unnatural arrangement, the bored East European salesman cooed, 'Dohn't worree...zis weel geeve.' He was right. I now own stove-pipes.

Throughout the weekend at every break and gathering I tried to track and tame this man. It wasn't working. I couldn't find him and when I did, he was surrounded by his new best friends. Perhaps they were asking where he bought his denim?

By Sunday night I was consumed by that feeling when you haven't even begun your semester assignment and it's due the next day. I still didn't have the story.

Sitting crossed-legged on the living room floor of Michael Lee Richard's house I spilt my plight to Ralph and Cheong Liew. Mr Liew sat like Buddha and proclaimed, 'As duck is to pinot, all things are meant to be', adding that if women ran the world it would be a better place. Bless him too.

Ralph bravely struggled with the seating arrangements, gave up, lay down on his back and suggested I put myself out of my misery by going to talk to Mr Bourdain.

I went next door, saw him and wimped out, striking up conversation instead with a younger crowd who turned out to be from New York City. They were entertaining and I had been there recently. We hit it off. I relaxed.

And then it happened.

He came over, he joined in. I was shocked. He was a top bloke. I wasn't ready for that. I was prepared for everything else, but not that. He even let me have a cigarette (Marlboro). Here I was, bracing myself for the restaurant haranguing, plate slapping, dark looks and intimidating grunts and snarls from all those years ago – all for nothing.

A few months later while watching the Farrelly Brothers' 'Stuck on You' the fantastically buxom Eva Mendes squealed, 'I love it when famous people turn out not to be dickwads!' I couldn't have agreed more. But Kevin, I still didn't get that story from that cooking guy – and he did ruin my weekend.

Cloudy Bay's viticulturist Siobán Harnett is an avid reader and can't wait to attend another celebrity food weekend.

MUSTS

Marlborough Wine Festival

Saturday 11 February 2006

Brancott Estate, Blenheim

Showcasing 200 wines from over 40 wineries.
Tickets: Red Tickets at your local PostShop
on 0800 000 575 or www.redtickets.co.nz.

Booking fees apply.

PH: 03 577 9299

Fax: 03 577 9298

www.wine-marlborough-festival.co.nz

Plane Sailing

Clonal developments are having an impact on pinot noir. But do you know the difference between 114 and 667?

Hang around any pinot noir winemaker (or even the cellarhand who dreams of one day making his very own take on Burgundy), and you'll soon get the impression they are speaking in tongues, or code.

Typically, a conversation can sound like this...

'Yeah, but UCD 5 gives it a dark, smoky, plummy character, better than the 10/5, or the 115.'

'Probably more so than clone 6, but 6 is good for funky, earthy notes. And 113 and 114 contribute components of cola and licorice.'

'Last year's pinot had plenty of 10/5, a good swig of Clone 5, a smidge 667, topped up with a splash of three more – 113, 777 and Clone 6. It's a ripper.'

Confused? Well here's an idea to help you sort out any further clonal complications.

Just think of planes – Metroliners, Saabs, Dash 8s, Boeings 707, 737, 747, the new 777, the DC10 and French Airbus range, and let MN spread your pinot wings.

With the help of Cloudy Bay winemaker Nick Lane we have devised a foolproof pinot clone decoder. It goes like this:

Clone 2/10 = DC10

Destined for the scrap heap. Unreliable, prone to reductive flavours, an uncomfortable ride.

Clone 10/5 = Boeing 747

Reliable performer with a solid framework and structure. The backbone of many Kiwi pinot noirs, and has carried countless pinot makers a long way. Ditto Cloudy Bay.

Clone 5 (aka UCD 5 and Pommard) = Airbus 320

Good overall European-origin performer and another key player in New Zealand. Delivers round, balanced mouth-feel and plummy fruit. No bumps.

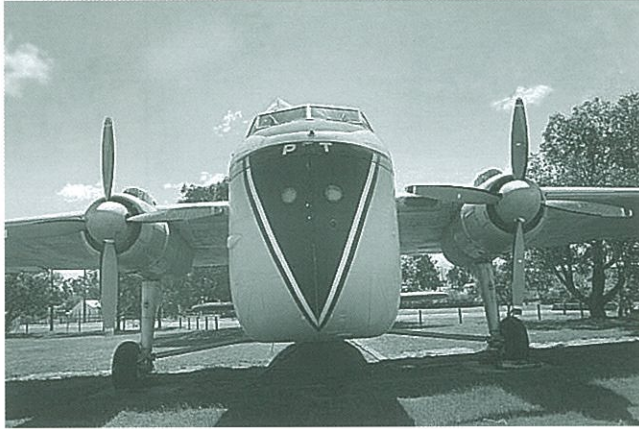
Clone 6 = Saab 340

A lighter clone, with fluid palate and nuances of cranberry, rhubarb and cherry. Solid performer for short-haul comfort.

Ata Rangi (aka Gumboot) Clone = Metroliner

No one admits how it got into NZ but this slim-line, sleek elegant performer has captured hearts and palates. Medium weight, fragrant, a trim package of roses, cherries and red fruits on a taut frame.

Clones 113, 114 and 115 = Boeing 707, 727, 737 respectively. Some models don't differ markedly.



The Kiwi Bristol freighter grounded, never cloned.

Of these three, the 113 tends to display extractive tannins, put your seat belt on for a bumpy ride. Cola, blackberry and licorice aren't usually on the beverage trolley, but these aromas and flavours are common to this clonal trio. Clone 115 is a bit fleshier and more prevalent these days, so read Boeing 737.

Clone 667 = Boeing 767

Relatively new kid on the block. Dark, big and juicy producing ripe black sweet fruit, cherry flavours; thick but soft tannins. Gets you there in relative ease.

Clone 777 = Boeing 777

Easy one to remember. Most recent model but bigger, more efficient, producing additional earthy notes, cassis leather, tobacco... (No smoking sign temporarily switched off.) Jam-packed with features; almost cabernet-like. A style-setter common in Europe.

And just for the record, Cloudy Bay Pinot Noir's winemakers fly every year on a selection of aircraft – Boeing 747, Airbus 320, Metroliners, Saab 340s and a couple of Boeings, especially the 777 when in international airspace. Variety is the spice of life, particularly when crafting pinot noir, or flying high.

GET HOOKED

You only have to go to the Goats Don't Shave nightclub in Blenheim to know that Marlborough boys have got all the answers. One of the town's progressive young men, Geoff Neal, and son of Cloudy Bay grower Philip Neal of Motukawa Vineyard has just released his first book with co-author David Rhind titled *Plenty More Fish in the CBD*. Neal is described as 'young, single and keen to mingle', which means he should have no problems promoting the 10,000 copy print run. Published by Random House, the book claims to tell all about how to hook, land and keep HER. Not on ice, one presumes. Available at good bookshops, \$34.95.

GLOBE TROTTERS

Some staff have been seeing a bit more than trellises, strainer posts and vine rows lately. Kevin Judd, Eveline Fraser and viticulturist Siobán Harnett, traded secateurs and wine thieves for cameras and set off to Mendoza in Argentina for the first global Moët Hennessy Wine Estates conference, hosted by Bodegas Chandon and Terrazas Del Los Andes, the company's two Argentinean wine estates. The gathering brought together senior staff from all MHWE companies, including Cloudy Bay and Cape Mentelle.

Then it was off across the Atlantic to the London Wine Trade Fair, the pivotal annual industry event in northern Europe where Cloudy Bay and Cape Mentelle have regularly exhibited current and new release wines, especially to the influential UK wine trade.



Mendoza – where vineyards thrive in the lee of the Andes.

CRACKLING KIWI

The name Oldman probably won't resonate with most readers of *Mentelle Notes*. In fact, Californian attorney Mark Oldman is a wine educator and writer. His first wine book *Oldman's Guide to Outsmarting Wine* (Penguin USA, 2004) recently fell under the gaze of MN's editor. Chapter 48 caught her attention.

It starts... 'You might be wondering what New Zealand can give you that you can't get in America or France or Italy. Does anybody really pine for a New Zealand prime rib or the latest fashion from Auckland?'

Oldman obviously hasn't heard of Trelise Cooper or Karen Walker. But he does know about Kiwi sauvignon blanc. 'When you order a New Zealand sauvignon blanc, the Kiwi nation will charm your table with a wine of ripe fruit and mouth-watering tanginess.' He especially likes its 'crackly factor', a characteristic Oldman attributes to NZ's intense sunlight and relatively cool maritime climate.

Happily, he commends Cloudy Bay to his readers, but the tip is obviously a bit superfluous for Lane Giguere, co-founder of Californian winery, RH Phillips whom Oldman quotes.

'Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc launched our passion for New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc... In fact, we carried a bottle home to give our winemaker, plunked it down on his desk, and said, 'make that.'

This story is recorded for history on page 151.

Cellar Rat

The Rat's back – this time with a double column spread!

Dearest Mentelles,

I thought it about time that some of the people that make up the strange and unusual world that is Cloudy Bay should be unveiled.

Out of the hat, I present Winston Oliver, aka Winnie, aka The Dark Lord, MBE (moody bastard extraordinaire). Winston started with us as a laconic ex-West Coast hippy with long hair and an earring. He'd decided he could make a difference in the wine industry after watching numerous Velluto Rosso fuelled sunsets on The Coast.

He moved to Marlborough to improve both the quality of his life and Marlborough wine and as fate would have it, showed up on Cloudy Bay's doorstep just before harvest 1989. I recall that the 89 harvest went without incident. I think. Ahh...Yeah, that's right.

Winnie, discovering that he had much to learn, enrolled in the local polytech viticulture course, one of its inaugural graduates. He then spent a year working for another wine company that no longer exists, which was no fault of Winnie's.

Subsequently, he returned to the Cloudy Bay fold full of knowledge and ideas. Frustrated at not becoming the Cloudy Bay winemaker he took over the role of bottling line foreman. He carried out this task successfully for many years, aided by numerous therapeutic walks to the Ngāio tree, and cunning plans to kill the Rat.

None of which, as this column can testify, succeeded. Although the incident in the warm room involving a forklift, pallets, a skylight, and the Rat almost made it. The Rat's mother's advice, to always carry a spare pair of undies, eventually came in handy. Thanks Mum!

When Winnie finally realised that the CBV winemaker job would forever be out of reach, a more natural and relaxed lifestyle beckoned. Yep, that's right, he became the CBV gardener.

The stress of getting the current vintage of Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc onto a ship bound for the UK was replaced by furnishing whingeing cellar door staff with constant supplies of winter firewood. And arguing with Kev over gum tree versus Kiwi native plantings, and what colour the petunias should be in the flower boxes.

As the gardener, Winnie was freed up to pursue his ultimate dream – to become a winemaker. He became the wine pioneer of the Waihopai Valley, a notoriously cold and depressing place that Winnie fitted perfectly.

Against all odds he produced a fantastic malbec/merlot blend that must allow anyone with even a glimmer of a palate to recognise the potential of malbec in Marlborough. Pity it's such an underrated grape! He also made a small batch of sparkling malbec for a very grateful Rat.



The Cellar Master – Winston Oliver.

But, behind every silver lining there lurks a very dark cloud. It came in the form of several years of badly timed frosts that savaged Winnie's vineyard.

*‘As the gardener,
Winnie was freed up
to pursue his
ultimate dream – to
become a winemaker.’*

Discovering at his age that the blood of a human freezes at the same temperature as that of the juice of a grape, and armed only with an ancient Massey Ferguson tractor and a rudimentary tow-behind two-bar heater, he realised his fight with the Almighty was a complete mismatch. Not one to admit defeat, he did.

He sold up. This was mourned by his many malbec fans who enjoyed his wines, but not his struggle.

So Dear Mentelles, we now come full circle to where it all started and Winnie rules the cellar at Cloudy Bay. With an iron will and a dark stare, our new Cellar Master strikes fear into winemaker and cellar-hand without discrimination.

Sometimes he even terrifies the production team – and that includes the Rat. Wish the staff could have seen the Dark Lord grooving to Howe Gelb upstairs at the Indigo Bar. They would have seen another human being enjoying their time on this planet. And I think he would agree. Thanks for coming onto this one mate.

Love light and peace,

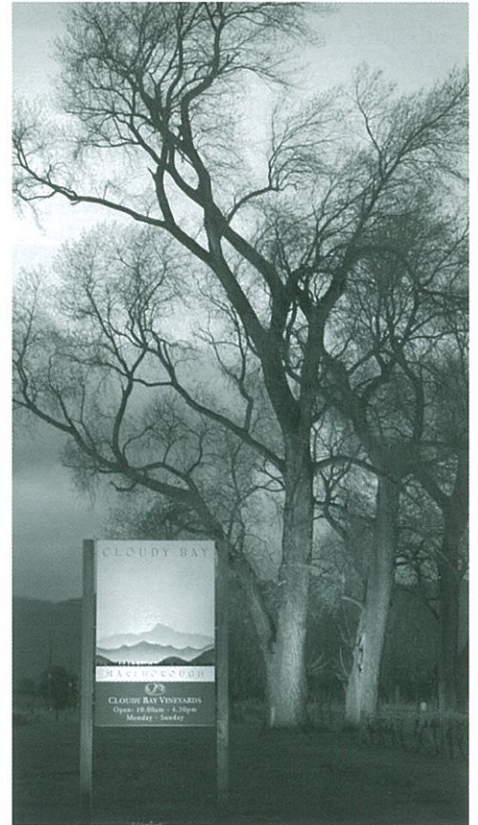
PS This one's for Maggie, Jess, Tansey, Imogen and Rainer.

SPRING CLEAN

It's that time of year when buds burst, birds sing and longer days herald the advent of Spring – a vital time in any vineyard calendar. Traditionally, it's also the time for some Sadie-style spit and polish.

Visitors to Cloudy Bay this coming Summer will notice the landscape gardeners (but not Winston) have been busy over winter – rearranging the entrance and driveway (now you arrive through those famed sauvignon blanc vines), erecting a new sign, installing water features, and even bike racks for those of you who elect for an energetic two-wheeler wine trail.

The next stage of the 2006 refurbishment will call on architects and designers to expand and contemporise the original cellar door that has greeted countless thousands of fans over its 21 years of operation. Time for a new look!



Cloudy Bay by night.

STOCKING UP

Santa's sleigh is positively groaning with goodies this year and right on top, ready for delivery to all readers keen to treat themselves and their friends and family, is the **Cloudy Bay Santa Six-Pack**. Bubbles and baubles for all!

The six single festive bottles include *Pelorus Vintage 2001*, new release *Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc 2005*, *Chardonnay 2003* and *Pinot Noir 2003*. Plus a zingy bottle of *Riesling 2001* and its sweet little sister, *Late Harvest Riesling 2002*.

Don't delay and we'll make sure Santa calls at your door (or chimney.)

The Sting

Sometimes it seems that budding Mentelle Ambassadors will go to extreme lengths to capture the Editor's attention. And their exploits do certainly challenge her geography. So, can you pinpoint the Cayman Islands on a map, the little dots bobbing in the Atlantic between Jamaica and Cuba?

British to its back teeth this remote Caribbean isle is well known to skindivers and seekers of tax havens. MN is convinced this issue's winning Mentelle Ambassador, Hilary Berryman from Newtown, Wellington, was there solely for the marine life, especially as she lovingly carried an ambassadorial bottle of *Cloudy Bay Chardonnay*. Seems its charms also work on stingrays.

You too can be part of CBV's export effort. It's easy. Next time you are far from home and spot a bottle of Cloudy Bay – at the latest chilly ice bar in Helsinki,



Getting the ray treatment, dive instructor Keith holds Hilary's bait in the Cayman Islands.

sleepy Gozitan trattoria, or the fridge at a Mongolian BBQ – buy it and take a photo. Then send it to The Editor; Mentelle Notes. Taking a bottle with you is also commended and encouraged. MN will publish the best and most alluring photo (make sure digital images are high resolution) and the winning Mentelle Ambassador will receive a FREE mixed case of CBV wines. All entrants receive a Cloudy Bay T-shirt.

TOYKO ROSES

Japan is a strong market for both the Cloudy Bay and Cape Mentelle portfolios, which prompted Kevin Judd and CMV's Simon Burnell's recent whirlwind visit. Organised by distributors Diageo Moët Hennessy, it included a special dinner at the Tokyo American Club, and several trade tastings. Kevin was especially impressed by the knowledge of Japanese sommeliers, and the wine skills of the waitresses at the Grand Hyatt. He doesn't think his karaoke is any comparison! (Nor is Simon's...)

But they both loved the sushi diet.



HANG DOG

We all know that a dog is a man's best friend. But some, it seems are spoiled rotten. Kiara, the labrador mate of Andy Simpson in Stroud, Gloucester, UK, would appear to have a thirst for that special Kiwi ambassador, and expects a new delivery any day now.



SEEING IS BELIEVING

Raise a glass of red for the Icelandic optometrists whose recently published study indicates that moderate red wine imbibers face only half the risk of developing cataracts. Results showed non-drinkers and heavy drinkers of any sort of alcohol had a substantially increased risk of cataract development. But if your intake falls between just two glasses a month to two or three glasses of red wine a day, the risk is halved. Seeing red takes on a whole new meaning.

MENTELLE NOTES

is the free publication of

CLOUDY BAY & CAPE MENTELLE VINEYARDS

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Pelorus Vintage 2000

'A lovely round toasty sparkling wine with a whiff of raspberries.'

Natalie McLean, NAT DECANTS

Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc 2005

'The 21st vintage, and winemaker Kevin Judd is still not missing a beat. Its level of aromatic vibrancy and palate concentration puts it ahead of most competitors. Amazing zest, intensity of gooseberry, citrus, tropical and herbal aromas and flavours.'

Huon Hooke, SUNDAY LIFE (AUSTRALIA)

Cloudy Bay Chardonnay 2003

'Very elegant and seductive wine with qualities that grow in the glass. It's a great example of a wine with subtle power. Grapefruit, cashew nut, wholemeal and sizzled butter flavours offer much appeal.'

'The wine has a vibrant freshness and energy that suggests good cellaring potential.'

95 points, Supreme White Winner

Bob Campbell MW, HOME & ENTERTAINING

'Has a smooth personality with grapefruity varietal flavour, nutty oak and creamy winemaking influences integrated perfectly, finishing clean and persistent.'

5 Stars, Ralph Kyte-Powell, THE AGE (AUSTRALIA)

Cloudy Bay Gewurztraminer 2003

'One of the country's most exotic and appealing gewurztraminers – this one a seductively scented, unctuous wine that smacks of mandarin, orange, apricots and nuts.'

Warren Barton, DOMINION POST

'Amazingly concentrated, it's brimming with nuances. There is rose water, mandarin, bergamot, Brazil nuts and hundreds more. Don't eat anything with it because it won't work. Drink it on its own.'

Greg Duncan Powell, SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

Cloudy Bay Te Koko 2002

'Chardonnay methods have been used to turn a zesty sauvignon blanc into a powerful, complex white without losing its hallmark varietal characters. The intense bouquet is of lychee and almond, the palate an assortment of candied citrus peel. A statuesque wine.'

Peter Bourne, SYDNEY MAGAZINE

Cloudy Bay Pinot Noir 2003

'One of the best versions of this variety in Marlborough. The 2003 is a phenomenal creation – low yields, serious clones (777, 667) and a darker, more menacing air, this is a Côte de Nuits to the 2002's Côte de Beaune...'

MATTHEW JUKES (UK)

Cape Mentelle

Cabernet Sauvignon 2000

'This would knock the socks off a Bordeaux in terms of intensity. Great balance. Ripe tannins tucked in underneath. Neat finish.'

Jancis Robinson MW

GOURMET TRAVELLER WINE

Cape Mentelle Trinders

Cabernet Merlot 2003

'Ripe, almost jammy with sweet cassis-like fruit ahead of dry, bayleaf tannin. Excellent balance and ripeness.'

90 points, Campbell Mattinson
WINEFRONT MONTHLY

Cape Mentelle Shiraz 2003

'Deeply scented with aromas of blackberries, red currants, chocolate vanilla oak and musky nuances of white pepper and cloves, a measured, ripe and assertive shiraz based around a vibrant and spicy expression of dense varietal fruit.'

91 Points, Jeremy Oliver,

AUSTRALIAN WINE ANNUAL 2006

A View from the Vineyard



Jim Tannock

The Welcoming Committee 2005

From left: Chris Verstappen, Del Lowther, Rachel Jackson, Wendy Healy, Diane Dwyer, Amanda Tollemache.

‘Wine is a bride who brings a great dowry to the man who woos her persistently and gracefully.’


EVELYN WAUGH



PRICE LIST & ORDER FORM

NOVEMBER • 2005



Wine	Description	Price per Case	Price per Bottle	Amount Ordered	Cost
Pelorus NV	Put more sparkle in your life! Savour the fine bead, mouth-filling flavour and balance of this Marlborough classic.	[Six-pack] \$197.70	\$32.95		
Pelorus Vintage 2001	Elegant effervescence. Rich, textured, complex, generous and indulgent. Treat yourself!	[Six-pack] \$234.00	\$39.00		
Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc 2005	Another classic year. Vibrant and packed with exotic tropical notes – ginger, lemongrass and citrus. Zing into Summer...	\$323.40	\$26.95		
Cloudy Bay Chardonnay 2003	Sings the blues – a lusty, dusty crooner. Notes of orange blossom, baked sponge cake, honey toasted nuts mellowed with smoky, flinty notes. Delish.	\$376.80	\$31.40		
Cloudy Bay Gewurztraminer 2003	Exotic Arabian nights wafting with scents of nougat and dried citrus, quince and sprinkled rose water.	[Three-pack] \$78.00	\$26.00		
Cloudy Bay Pinot Noir 2003	Be seduced...intense, savoury and silky with a lithe frame. The layers just keep unfolding...	[Six-pack] \$223.20	\$37.20		
Cloudy Bay Late Harvest Riesling 2002	Zesty marmalade, citrus and honey. True nectar and a perfect foil for orange crème brûlée.	[12x375ml] \$312.00	\$26.00		
SANTA'S SIX PACK	 1 x Pelorus Vintage 2001 1 x CB Riesling 2001 1 x CB Sauvignon Blanc 2005 1 x CB Pinot Noir 2003 1 x CB Chardonnay 2003 1 x CB Late Harvest Riesling 2002	[Six-pack] \$186.55	N/A		
MARGARET RIVER MIX	2 x CM Shiraz 2003 2 x CM Zinfandel 2003 2 x CM Cabernet Sauvignon 2000	\$238.30	N/A		
CB BLACK BIBBED APRON		N/A	(inc. postage) \$25.00		

Maximum purchase 3 bottles

Order 3 Cases and receive a CLOUDY BAY T-SHIRT FREE!

REMITTANCE DETAILS

I enclose a cheque made payable to CLOUDY BAY VINEYARDS

CHARGE MY CREDIT CARD

- VisaCard
- Mastercard
- American Express
- Diners Club
- Bankcard

NZ DELIVERY ADD \$7.00 PER CASE

TOTAL NZ\$
(INCLUDING GST)

EXPIRY DATE /

Signature.....

CONTACT & DELIVERY DETAILS

Name (Mr/Mrs/Ms)
First
Surname

Postal Address

..... Postcode

Tel: () (Daytime) () (Evening)

Fax: () Email

Delivery Address and Instructions

PLEASE NOTE

1. Feel free to make up your own mixed case using the bottle prices listed.
2. All prices are GST inclusive
3. Send order with payment to Cloudy Bay Vineyards Ltd, in the Free Post envelope provided or Facsimile (03) 520 9040
4. Only persons aged 18 years or over may legally order wine.
5. Deliveries can only be made to a street address – not a PO Box or RD number.
6. Please allow 10 days for delivery.
7. Send Em Mentelle in the UK regrettably no longer available.



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