

# M E Q

CHRISTMAS 2005 Morton Estate Quarterly Bulletin

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## *Golden Christmas for Morton Estate*

**Morton Estate Wines is celebrating a raft of wins for its chardonnays in competitions both here and overseas, reinforcing the winery's reputation as a leading local and international wine producer.**

The latest and one of the most exciting, is gaining a Gold Medal and the New World Champion Open White Wine Trophy at the Air New Zealand Wine Awards on November 12th for our 2002 White Label Hawkes Bay Chardonnay. The Air New Zealand Awards are New Zealand's leading wine competition and our chardonnay was matched against all other white wines.

November started in great style when our 2000 Coniglio – Morton Estate's premium chardonnay, was awarded two trophies at one of the world's top wine competitions, the 2005 Decanter World Wine

**"It's not just our top of the range wines like Black Label and Coniglio that are being recognised as top quality chardonnays,"**

Awards. Coniglio was judged to be the Top New Zealand Chardonnay and Best International Chardonnay over £10 in the London-based competition that compares thousands of wines from all around the globe. The Coniglio Chardonnay win was followed by a Blue-Gold Medal for our 2002 Private Reserve Chardonnay at the Sydney Top 100 competition. Here, over



John M Coney and Steven Spurrier

two thousand wines were judged from all around the world and matched with selected food dishes.

Locally our 2002 chardonnays have also scored very well:

- The Winestate Magazine Hawkes Bay Wine Awards (Silver Medal for the 2002 Riverview Chardonnay).
- The Mercedes Benz Hawkes Bay Wine Awards (Gold Medal for the 2002 Black Label Chardonnay and a Silver Medal for the 2002 Three Vineyards Chardonnay).

This latest Air New Zealand award takes Morton Estate back to our roots, to a time when our first chardonnay vintage won Gold at the Air New Zealand awards. That win firmly established Morton Estate as a top producer of chardonnays. Since then it has regularly gained accolades for

this variety, including the Trophy for Best Chardonnay in the World at the prestigious 1997 London International Wine Challenge. Morton Estate Sales and Marketing Director, Fiona MacDiarmid, says the recognition of wines at leading

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# NEWS & VIEWS



competitions in New Zealand and around the world is very gratifying for all the staff at Morton Estate Wines. "It's not just our top of the range wines like Black Label and Coniglio that are being recognised as top quality chardonnays," she says.

"The latest Air New Zealand award is for the 2002 White Label Hawkes Bay Chardonnay which is a mid-price wine, under \$20. It is a well developed product that you can buy at most retail outlets.

We are justifiably proud of winning this important award."

Fiona MacDiarmid says Morton Estate's philosophy is to deliver exceptional quality at the various price points in our extensive range.

"We try hard to over-delivering quality at these price points. To win Gold at the Air New Zealand Wine Awards with an under \$20 wine proves we are succeeding."

## Morton Estate And Simply You Living Magazine

**It seems Morton Estate is becoming the wine of choice for the country's fashion elite, if this high profile event is anything to go by.**

In October Paula Ryan's new style bible, Simply You Living, was launched at

Broiche – a beautiful foyer café in central Auckland. About a hundred and fifty people attended the event and the wine of choice was Morton Estate's Riverview Hawkes Bay Chardonnay 2002 and Stone Creek Marlborough Pinot Noir 2001.

Maria Ryan, editor of Simply You Living and sister of Paula Ryan, says the latest magazine to hit New Zealand shelves is a 'How To' guide to home decorating, interior design, entertaining and travel. The first copy, which features adverts

from Morton Estate, went on sale on October 31st of this year.

"We chose Morton Estate for our launch because they were involved in our first issue, and it also fitted our criteria of being a fantastic New Zealand product," Maria Ryan says.

Morton Estate is also teaming up with fashion designer Annah Stretton for a showing of leading edge designs in December. More on that in the next MEQ.

## Coniglio Tasting At Morton House

**A group of winewriters and guests hosted at Morton House in Auckland were able to sample the poetry of chardonnay in two tasting sessions.**

Our Hawkes Bay winemaker, Evan Ward, hosted a vertical tasting of our premium chardonnay, Coniglio, across all four vintages - 1998, 2000, 2002 and 2004. He then moved on to a horizontal tasting of a range of Morton Estate chardonnays from the acclaimed 2002 vintage.

The featured wines were the Coniglio, Riverview Chardonnay, White Label Chardonnay, fresh from its win in the Air New Zealand Wine awards, Black Label Chardonnay and Private Reserve Chardonnay, fresh from winning a Blue Gold Medal in the 2006 Sydney Top 100 competition. Evan talked guests through the influences that make each wine subtly and

wonderfully different. The general weather conditions, harvest dates and brix levels, winemaker influences such as malolactic fermentation and the barrels in which the wine is aged.



Coniglio Tasting at Morton House

# New Releases For Christmas



Pinot Noir vineyard

## White Label Marlborough Riesling 2005



The lime, grapefruit and marmalade characteristics in this aromatic wine makes it an excellent accompaniment to



Hawkes Bay Barrel Hall

"We talked about flavours and structures of our wines and Morton Estate's objective of creating fine elegant styles of wine," says Evan. The influence of Riverview - a pioneering vineyard location in the Hawkes Bay, was compared with some of the more recent vineyards, such as Tantallon. Evan also told the guests that the newer plantings are giving Morton Estate more blending options.

"Tantallon is warmer in the nights so the wines from there are more forward and broader, but we explored the blending options available by using fruit from Riverview with fruit from Tantallon to achieve a wine such as the Private Reserve Hawkes Bay Chardonnay," says Evan.

The tasting also introduced another pioneering vineyard, Kinross. "Morton Estate's Kinross is across the river from Riverview and like Riverview, was the first vineyard in that area," says Evan. "It has proved to be an inspired choice. with the fruit proving to be every bit as good as Riverview, our premium vineyard."

fish and chicken dishes. A fine example of what our Stone Creek Vineyard can produce; it has a crisp lively palate followed by a lingering mineral, rose-water flavoured finish.

With its shingle plains on the banks of the Wairau River, Stone Creek Vineyard boasts the most sunshine hours in New Zealand. Coupled with long cool nights, the grapes undergo a slow ripening process adding to the distinctive flavours. These conditions, present in the 2005 vintage, suit Riesling well.

The White Label Marlborough Riesling 2005 is ready to enjoy now. However, it will also respond favourably to cellaring for two to three years.

## White Label Hawkes Bay Pinot Noir 2002



This wine is the result of blending the fruit of six different clones from two vineyards to produce a highly complex pinot noir with dark fruit flavours. Lifted aromas of mocha chocolate, boysenberry and raspberry complement an intense black plum character. The vine clones were specially selected from around the

world and the 2004 White Label Hawkes Bay Pinot Noir is truly a multi dimensional wine. Displaying on the palate a full-bodied roundness and a grainy tannin structure, this wine leaves a deliciously



Kinross Vineyard

lingering smoky finish. The wine blends the fruitier notes from Morton Estate's Colefield Vineyard with the earthy forest floor flavours from our Kinross Vineyard. The weather also played its part with excellent pinot noir conditions allowing the fruit to achieve ripeness.

The long Indian summer allowed the fruit to hang, reducing acid levels while intensifying the flavour until we were ready to pick when the mix of sugar, acids and flavour was at its best. According to our winemaker, Evan Ward,

"this was a good year for wine, especially pinot noir and chardonnay."

This full-bodied wine is a wonderful accompaniment to your Christmas turkey with cranberry sauce.



Vertical Coniglio Tasting, 1998, 2000, 2002 and 2004





# That particular Boxing Day Races

would have been one to remember if I hadn't forgotten my glasses. Which probably explains why I had the newspaper's pick of horse number six upside down. Which wouldn't have mattered if I hadn't bet our winter holiday fund on it. Which may have been what caused Sarah to kick me in the shins. Well at least she would have if I hadn't stood up at that moment to applaud the boss's horse coming in sixth. Which meant that Sarah actually broke her toe on the ice bucket between our feet. Which happened to be chilling a nice bottle of Morton Non Vintage Brut. Which was unanimously regarded as the pick of the day.

*Distinctive passion*

MORTON ESTATE



# WINE & FOOD

## Wine and Food Match

The 2004 Stone Creek Sauvignon Blanc is the perfect complement to a dish fresh from the kitchen at Morton's - fresh garden greens with coss lettuce, oakleaf lettuce and rocket, caper berries and nesturgon flowers. Cooked prawns complete the picture with wedges of black rye bread. The salad is later sprinkled with a strawberry dressing.



The 2004 Stone Creek Sauvignon Blanc is a wine to be proud of – in our view its quality surpasses that of the the 2002 vintage, which won Best Sauvignon Blanc in the World at the London International Wine Challenge in 2003. The Stone Creek Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2004 has beautiful weight and structure on the palate with the nose demonstrating a riper style with perfumed passionfruit, limes and subtle mineral overtones.

It is a close relative of the Marchioness of Morton, the recently released Black Label Sauvignon Blanc that pays a stylistic tribute to the White Houses of Bordeaux such as Domaine de Chevalier and Chateau Pape Clement.

With the Stone Creek Sauvignon Blanc 2004, our winemaker has once again used the techniques perfected by the wineries in that region and the quality of this wine is assured. We battled the weather, including cold fronts and threatening frosts but by overcoming those challenges we have created an outstanding wine, making this vintage very special indeed.



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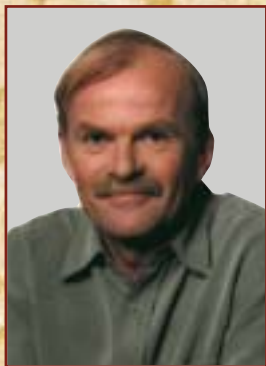
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# Winewriter's Choice Michael Cooper



## Black Label Hawkes Bay Chardonnay 2002

(Excerpt from Michael Cooper's 2006 Buyers Guide to New Zealand Wines).

**Grown at the company's cool, slightly elevated Riverview Vineyard at Mangatahi, this is one of the classiest of all New Zealand Chardonnays.**

It's typically a powerful wine, robust and awash with flavour, yet highly refined, with beautifully intense citrusy fruit, firm acid spine and the structure to flourish with age. It is fully barrel-fermented, and given the wine's concentrated fruit characters, the French oak barriques are 100 percent new. The 2002 vintage is another classic. Beautifully fragrant, with fresh, ripe fruit aromas mingled with mealy, biscuity notes. It is opulent and immaculate, powerful and fresh with ripe grapefruit, pear, peach and toasty oak flavours, still unfolding. Mealy and complex, with impressive vibrancy and richness, it should be long-lived.



# Winemaker's Choice Evan Ward



## Black Label Methode Traditionnelle 2000

**Morton Estate's Black Label Methode Traditionnelle is only produced in years when nature provides us with perfect fruit. After the 1997 blend, three vintages passed before I was happy with the quality of the fruit that must have perfect sugar/acid balance and flavours at harvest.**

The 2000 blend was made from roughly equal proportions of pinot noir and meunier, the two varieties that provide structure and weight to the traditional Champagne blends. Chardonnay was not included as the pinot bases had such elegance by themselves. Maturation on lees in the bottle has been for a minimum period of four years to optimise the lovely creamy yeasty flavours from the autolysis of the yeast. This autolysis also helps to fill out the palate and give the wine its great length of flavour. Freshness and liveliness has been enhanced by keeping the sugar level of the wine at the lower end of the Brut range.

I am very excited by this wine and it is great to see it come together after the long wait we've had while it matured on lees. While drinking it now will show off the yeast autolysis characters to the maximum, further ageing of up to at least five years will add even greater complexity from the bottle ageing characters that will enhance the nutty, cashew type flavours.



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