

# M E Q

Morton Estate Quarterly Bulletin

Issue 31

## Back To Back Trophies For Morton Estate Coniglio

**Creating great wines is not enough for Morton Estate – we also strive for consistency in our quality.**

Now our efforts have been recognised with the third Trophy for Coniglio at the Decanter World Wine Awards, announced in London May 16th.

Coniglio chardonnays from the 2000 and now the 2002 vintages have secured back-to-back Trophy wins for Best New Zealand Chardonnay at the prestigious Decanter World Wine Awards, one of Europe's leading wine competitions.

Last year our 2000 vintage also won the Trophy for Best International Chardonnay and the 2002 vintage is in the running again – with the Trophy winner being announced in September. The London based awards judge thousands of wines from all over the globe, choosing the very best from each region and then comparing the wines to select the overall International Trophy Winners.

While the Trophy recognises Coniglio as the best of the regional Chardonnays, we're also proud of the silver medals awarded at the 2006 Decanter awards to our 2002 Black Label Chardonnay, The Marchioness of Morton 2004 and The Regent of Morton 2002.

These wines are all refinements of Morton Estate's winemaking expertise and their selection by the awards judges is a great



vote of confidence in our company's philosophy of producing the best quality wine at all price ranges. Morton Estate's Director of Sales and Marketing, Fiona MacDiarmid, says the company is ecstatic at gaining the second trophy in two years for different vintages of Coniglio.

"It shows the consistency of this wine, so for us this award is an enormous success because it rewards our fundamental philosophy," says Fiona.

"Not only did we gain the Trophy for the company's best quality wine but a range of our other wines were also recognised

for their quality. It's a great boost to our team after the many years of hard work they have put in."

"It's an enormous success, both for New Zealand wine as a whole, and for Morton Estate in particular."

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# Vintage Report

In the Hawkes Bay our winemaker Evan Ward describes the vintage, in his typical tongue in cheek way, as "testing."

Despite some unsettled weather we have Chardonnay good enough to make our premium wines, Coniglio and Black Label.

"It'll be a very good vintage for reds, with intense colours and flavours, particularly the Syrah which is intense, peppery and varietal," says Evan. "The Pinot Noir is also impressive with strong colours, good integrity and flavours."

"Highlights for the Hawkes Bay vintage are the Sauvignon Blancs, which I think are some of the best we have made for some time, with a real mix of characters."

## Stone Creek

Record-breaking hours of sunshine with rainfall at critical periods set Stone Creek up for an outstanding season, especially for our Sauvignon Blanc. While Pinot Noir



cropping levels were down, the balance of the flavours and quality of fruit was excellent. Riesling canopies held up well, producing fruit with good flavour intensity. This was Stone Creek at its best, according to Vineyard Manager, David Craig.

## Kuranui (The Golden Treasure)

Paul McIntyre, our Vineyard Manager is looking forward to seeing the result of Kuranui's very first harvest.

With juice of exceptional quality, Paul feels sure that he has given the winemaker a great product to work with. The generally dry season with warm days and cool nights delivered conditions that allow Sauvignon Blanc to truly excel.

Also, with little rain around harvest, which occurred two weeks early, conditions were ideal for Kuranui to live up to its name by producing Sauvignon Blanc to treasure.

# Double Winner At Sydney Wine Competition

**Morton Estate Wines kicked off the year with one of its most exciting competition wins ever.**



Our 2002 Private Reserve Hawkes Bay Chardonnay brought home two Trophies from the respected Sydney International Wine Competition – which compares thousands of quality wines from around the globe to find the Top 100.

It won the Trophy for Best Non-Australian Wine and the SIWC Perpetual Trophy for Best Fuller Bodied Dry White Table Wine of the entire competition.

**Morton Estate Director, Sales and Marketing, Fiona MacDiarmid says it was outstanding that the company had won the Trophies at such a competitive wine event.**

The 2002 Private Reserve Chardonnay is a carefully selected blend from Hawkes Bay vineyards. Perfectly ripened Chardonnay grapes, exhibits generous melon, pineapple and peach flavours with the ever persuasive input of smoky oak.

Among the judges' comments on the Chardonnay were:

"A lovely complex, textured and elegant wine. Clean and racy enough to make this an all rounder. A very positive food and wine match."



## CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

Helen Jury and her four friends celebrate the successful finish of their first Triathlon in Hamilton, with none other than a bottle of Morton Premium Brut.

Helen wins a signed Morton Estate, "Discover the Art" limited edition signed print for sending this photo in.

Please Post or email us your comments / photos. If published in the MEQ you will win a signed "Discover the Art" print.

# Morton's Sparklers - Bubbling Along

## Morton Non Vintage Premium Brut

This sparkling wine is a signature brand for Morton Estate – in many ways it is everything the company stands for. While it is by no means expensive, it is a wine of outstanding quality, described by our Hawkes Bay Winemaker Evan Ward as a work in progress. In 2003 it won the Sparkling Wine Trophy at the prestigious Air New Zealand Wine Awards – the second time Morton Premium Brut has starred at the awards. In 1987 the very first Morton Premium Brut won the same Trophy. A great achievement.

"We are determined to develop Morton Premium Brut into one of the great New Zealand sparkling wines and are seeing some good results from our hard work over the years," he says.

The base wines come from the vineyards located in the cooler regions of the Hawkes Bay using management techniques developed at Riverview, Morton Estate's flagship vineyard.

"We have Morton Premium Brut bases going back to 1998. By back-blending the new wines with previous bases we can introduce aged characters, flavour intensity and also consistency to the blend."

The wine is also developing French characteristics while retaining the freshness and vigour of a good NZ sparkling wine. It will develop more over the next few years as the older bases create more aged characteristics. Morton Premium Non Vintage Brut is becoming more and more like traditional Champagne, says our Winemaker Evan Ward. The winemaking

process creates the yeasty characteristics for which Morton Premium Brut is renowned. The wine is kept on yeast lees, ageing until it is required for sale. This process keeps the wine fresh as well as developing the bread/yeasty flavours, which are so appealing in this wine.

## Morton Black Label Methode Champenoise 2000

The majority of sparkling wines produced are non-vintage wines where blending of older base wines creates consistency and complexity. It is only in exceptional years

**"We are determined to develop Morton Premium Brut into one of the great New Zealand sparkling wines and are seeing some good results from our hard work over the years."**

that the fruit delivers such intensity and vibrancy that it can be used unblended to produce a wine of exceptional quality.

This style of wine, referred to as Vintage Sparkling Wine, still retains the typical yeasty/bready aromas but also has extra intensity of flavour from the exceptional fruit. Because stringent criteria are used for fruit selection, this style is not made every year by Morton Estate.

In fact from the last nine vintages we have only produced five vintage sparkling wines. Our style depends on a large proportion of Pinot Noir in the blend, in some years almost 100%, so that the wine has the palate weight and flavour to substitute for the complexity achieved



from blending in non-vintage wines. Further, the wine is aged after fermentation in bottle for an extended period to add complexity. This ageing is done for far longer than a non-vintage wine would receive. Our 2000 vintage sparkling has had five years ageing in bottle and is still only being disgorged "on demand" so it can only improve as the months pass.



## Big Windfall? Reach For The Morton Brut

**What wine is perfect for celebrating a windfall of \$700 million? Of course, we'd recommend Morton Brut sparkling wine and it seems that Sam Morgan and the team from Trade Me agree.**

When Sam and his team toasted the sale of their site for \$700 million to Fairfax Newspapers, they filled their glasses with Morton Premium Brut. While this wine is not expensive, it is the best quality and we can only applaud their good taste in choosing it as the best way of celebrating New Zealand's biggest website sale to date.

## Morton's On The Los Angeles A-List



**A sit down dinner for filmmaking talent and key Hollywood people, hosted by New Zealand, would not be the same without some classic Kiwi wines to enjoy.**

Morton Estate wines were an important part of New Zealand's pre-Oscars dinner in Los Angeles in March 2006, an event organised to promote the capabilities of the New Zealand film industry. The event

is part of the Investment New Zealand Film Leveraging Project aimed at highlighting New Zealand's top filmmaking achievements - as well as maintaining and generating further investment in the growing screen production industry.

For Morton Estate it was an opportunity to showcase some of its finer wines to a guest list that included the Consul General in Los Angeles and people responsible for the production of eight films shot in New Zealand. These included King Kong, The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe, The World's Fastest Indian, Sione's Wedding and River Queen.

Local talent including Martin Henderson, Radha Mitchell, Belinda Todd and Temuera Morrison – who officiated as MC – were present to celebrate the impressive seven Oscar nominations shared between two films, King Kong and The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe.



Pan roasted duck infused with star anise and cinnamon bark served with roast vegetables and blueberry Merlot jus.

Accompanied by the 2004 White Label Hawkes Bay Merlot



perfect guest. As a single vineyard wine, the Stone Creek Marlborough Pinot Noir 2002 has forest floor characteristics. This trademark will be evident in future vintages making it sought after by anyone who enjoys good Pinot Noir.

### **White Label Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2005**

2005 was a good year for our White Label Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc resulting in a wine with delicate and complex aromas of guava, pineapple and pawpaw with a hint of capsicum. Refreshing flavours of limes and citrus carry the wine's intensity through the whole palate leading to a well-rounded finish.

Ideal for autumn, summer or spring this wine offers an excellent way to end the day or start the weekend's rest and recreation, regardless of the time of year. It will complement seafood and chicken dishes and is also a good match to Asian meals, especially Vietnamese and Thai.

### **White Label Hawkes Bay Merlot 2004**

This is a true St. Emilion, Pomerol style wine with elegant intensities - both well structured and approachable. It deserves to be lingered over to allow the vanillin oak, soft tannin finish to come through.

Aromas of plums, black currants and light chocolate with hints of cigar box and vanilla fill the nose. Flavours of dark plums and black currants dominate the first encounter with this wine.

Hints of latte coffee and dark chocolate grow in intensity with the integration of vanilla and oak. Subtle cedar and wood characteristics extend the experience with a soft tannin finish.

While this wine is ready to enjoy right now, more maturation in your cellar (2-5 years) will further enhance its qualities.

This 2004 Merlot provides a superb accompaniment to beef served with a reduced jus. Pork or lamb, if served with light sauces, would also be excellent partners for this wine.

## **New Releases For Winter**

### **Stone Creek Marlborough Pinot Noir 2002**

With the hunting season well underway, here is a wine that will make an excellent partner for wild venison or pheasant.

Rich and crimson in colour, the 2002 Stone Creek Marlborough Pinot Noir is a

brilliant example of a Marlborough Pinot Noir. The alluring perfumed notes of mushroom and raspberry ensure that this wine will greatly enhance any gathering as it releases its flavours over convivial company and good food.

Give it two hours in the right social situation and this wine will prove itself the

# New Winemaker

The song "I've been everywhere man" could be the theme of our new Katikati Winemaker, Nic Millichip, who brings to Morton Estate a wealth of winemaking experience gained across New Zealand, Australia, France and the US.



Nic takes responsibility for our Katikati operation, which includes the Cellar Door sales, winery, bottling plant and warehouse. He says he was attracted to Morton Estate by the company's sound reputation. That's a big vote of confidence from a person whose experience is truly global.

Nic is from a family with a background in the beverage industry, with his father working for Lion and DB Breweries. Nic studied Food Science and Human Nutrition at Otago and found he was enjoying the winemaking side and took more interest in that.

After finishing university he had an opportunity to test wine-making as a potential career by working with Neudorf during the 1992 vintage.

Deciding to gain practical experience before returning to tertiary studies, he worked in a wine bar and followed that by becoming a cellar hand. Nic did a vintage with Houghton Wines in Western Australia before attending the leading wine college, Roseworthy, gaining his Graduate Diploma in 1996.

He then worked at Littorial Wines in the Napa Valley, California and Reynolds Wines, Australia, before heading off to France and the biodynamic delights of Domain Richeaum in Provence, where Chardonnay, Shiraz, Cabernet and Merlot are produced.

**"It was a pretty cool place and while I was there an archeological dig was taking place uncovering a Roman dwelling," he says.**

Returning to Australia he continued working at Reynolds Wines before once again deciding to sample the wine styles of the world, working in South Africa for Flagstone Wines, back to Australia and New Zealand, then on to Burgundy in France for yet another vintage.

Nic says he is looking forward to the challenge of continuing to produce quality wines with Morton Estate.

"Morton Estate has a fantastic name, it's a progressive company and they are making wine because they love making wines and have good vineyards. The company is growing and one of the challenges is to continue making wines of high standard."

## Morton's Restaurant - Barrel Hall Dinner



According to Chef Carl Sutton, Thursday April 13, was a lucky day for the 25 guests who filled the Barrel Room to experience the first ever "Dinner by Candlelight".

The evening began with a complimentary glass of Morton Premium Brut followed by a seafood and game tasting platter. The recommended wine matches were our White Label Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2005 or White Label Hawkes Bay

Pinot Noir 2004. Pan-roasted duck served on roast root vegetables with blueberry and red wine jus followed, with the recommended wine match of Morton Estate Black Label Syrah 2002 or White Label Private Reserve Chardonnay 2002.

Guests have already asked to be booked for the next event, despite there being no firm date set. Planning for another is underway. So make sure your name is on the list when they announce the next "Barrel Hall Dinner by Candlelight".

**For further information on MORTON ESTATE WINES or the MEQ, please fill out the following:**

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