

News, views & latest releases from Te Mata Estate

Spring fever is definitely in the air and nowhere is that more noticeable than here at the winery. Pruning of all grape varieties is now complete and we have had plenty of rain through the winter. Soil moisture levels are at their optimum, which will take us into the early summer period without the need for supplementary irrigation. Early varieties such as chardonnay are showing flower emergence, with full flowering expected in November. Here's hoping for another excellent vintage in 2009.

Over the winter, it has been a busy few months for Te Mata Estate. Several of the management team have conveniently avoided winter's worst weather. John and Nicholas both escaped to the northern hemisphere for sales visits through May and June, meeting together briefly in London for the annual International Wine and Spirit Trade Fair. Not to be left out in the cold, so to speak, I followed John's and Nick's lead and headed to the UK in July for a family function. I was fortunate to visit a couple of our distributors in London who made me feel very welcome and proud to represent Te Mata Estate.

It's lovely to now be back in New Zealand, the home of fine wine, 'fush 'n chups' and 'jandals'. One day I might convert the staff at Te Mata Estate to 'chip butties' and 'flip flops', but they will never compromise on the quality of their wine!

Bullnose '07 Available!

The cover of this newsletter says it all. Bullnose '07 is here, photographed in front of the radiator of an original Morris Cowley 'Bullnose'. Bullnose '07 is the first of our full-bodied reds from the fantastic 2007 vintage and I can tell you that it has been worth the wait! Bullnose '07 is a majestic wine with a deep magenta colour, aromas of dark cherry syrup, with plum, cherry and raspberry flavours, all with ripe and silky tannins.

This is the best Bullnose we have made. It is absolutely delicious and will cellar for a further 8 to 10 years. In order for you to try this wine, we have included Bullnose '07 in a case offer this month, partnering it with the ever elegant Elston '07. These wines display the quality of Te Mata Estate and are perfect for those special Christmas occasions which are coming up!



CHRISTMAS PRE-EMPTER \$399 save \$43.80
6 Bullnose '07 and 6 Elston '07

Also released in this newsletter is our Woodthorpe Chardonnay '07, a deliciously fresh and fruity wine with stonefruit and citrus overtones, and an underlying subtle creamy elegance from barrel fermentation. This wine is sure to alert the senses that it's time to put away the slippers and flannel for another year and enjoy the spring sunshine.

Woodthorpe Vineyard price adjustment

We purchased our Woodthorpe vineyard in 1993 and since this time it has fulfilled all our quality expectations. It produces wines with lifted floral and stonefruit aromatics and mouth filling flavours and, like all our vineyards, is run in accordance with Sustainable Winegrowing New Zealand (SWNZ).

Since 2007, the Woodthorpe vineyard has been in full crop and is achieving cost-per-tonne benefits that we are now able to pass on to you, our customers. As a result, we are now re-pricing most of our Woodthorpe vineyard wines – Woodthorpe Chardonnay '07, Merlot/Cabernet '06 and Syrah '06 will all be priced at the same level as the Sauvignon Blanc '08 and Gamay Noir '08. The Woodthorpe Vineyard collection delivers wines of everyday luxury and we have included a selection of these wines in our case special. This can be ordered by calling 0800 TEMATA or via our website on www.temata.co.nz.

EVERYDAY LUXURY \$189 save \$13.80
3 Woodthorpe Chardonnay '07, 3 Woodthorpe Sauvignon Blanc '08,
3 Woodthorpe Syrah '06 and 3 Woodthorpe Merlot/Cabernet '06

Please note that from the 2008 vintage, our Viognier will be re-named. Full details will be announced in our Autumn newsletter in 2009.

I look forward to sharing my Christmas newsletter with you all. Until then, roll on summer!

With warm wishes,

Sally

Coleraine – the first 25 years

2008 has been the year when we celebrated the release of 25 years of Coleraine. By the quirkiest of coincidences, on Saturday May 3, just as 230 people gathered at the Hawkes Bay Opera House to taste every vintage of Coleraine, we received Neal Martin's New Zealand commentary for Parker's Wine Advocate. In this, he said of Coleraine;

"I would have no hesitation placing it within the class of Bordeaux second growths."



So what is a Bordeaux second growth?

In 1855, the Châteaux of Medoc and Graves were classified, from first to fifth, covering the top 62 estates of the left bank of the Gironde, excluding St Emilion and Pomerol. The classification was loosely based on the prices regularly achieved by each of the wines. There were four 'firsts' and fifteen 'seconds'. (Today those 'seconds' cost around \$300 per bottle). Although the allocation of who sits where in the classification is open to debate, the broad principles of quality underlying the ranking have remained well understood.

So to get such a compliment after 25 vintages of Coleraine makes the effort seem worthwhile. We have a lot more to do to become even better, but do consider greater vine age will deliver even greater complexity, and that we need to maintain our focus on floral and bramble aromatics, the long natural tannin finish, and richness rather than sweetness in flavour.

As the founders of Te Mata Estate step back a bit and younger people are increasingly involved in the next stages of wine improvement, it is great to have reached as high a level of reputation as is possible in the time we have been in winemaking. When we took over Te Mata Estate in 1978, if someone was to have said, "by the time you have released 25 vintages you will have been accorded the same recognition as a second growth," we would have replied; "you're kidding!" But that is what has happened. And are we proud? You bet we are!

- John Buck

Investing in the future

Larry Morgan, Te Mata Estate's Viticulturist, is our resident environmentalist, constantly reminding us of our responsibilities to future generations. Here's just a few of the improvements Larry's developed over the last couple of years:

1. Vineyard – All of our vineyards are permanently grassed, thereby encouraging earthworm activity and enhancing soil structure. Many use companion plantings of various species of other flowering annuals to encourage natural predators, thus reducing the need for spray intervention. Sheep are run in the vineyards from May to September to control grass and weed, with the added benefit of the addition of a low rate of natural fertilizer.
2. Recycling – Most of our carton dividers used in wine boxes are made from recycled cardboard and a good proportion of all New Zealand made bottles are made from recycled glass. Winery and vineyard waste, cardboard, plastic and glass bottles are all collected for recycling at a local recycling facility.
3. Winery – Our cellar staff will tell you that winemaking is all about the cleaning and this involves a lot of water. Unfortunately, water in equals water out and waste water can be an economic and environmental problem for wineries. At Te Mata Estate we have just completed a three year project to build a state of the art waste water treatment system. The clean treated water, with a neutral pH, is then pumped to the Havelock North waste water system.
4. Carbon Footprint – Electricity use at the winery is as conservative as possible, with our insulated warehouses and underground second year barrel cellar requiring neither winter heating nor summer cooling. In the last two years, the company vehicle fleet has been replaced with modern, fuel-efficient, lower emission diesel motor vehicles.



Have wine, will travel

May and June saw me covering the globe, visiting wine regions, attending trade fairs and catching up with Te Mata Estate distribution partners in some of the most exciting and developing wine markets in the world.

First stop was California, looking at red wine developments in Napa and Sonoma. I stayed with friends Doug and Lee Nalle at their Nalle winery, producer of the world's finest Zinfandels. Their '84 was one of the wine highlights of my trip.

Next stop was the London International Wine and Spirit Trade Fair with John, a great event following on from our Coleraine vertical to open last year's fair. Attendees loved the latest releases with listings expanding from our regular top end restaurant customers into Selfridges, The Wine Society, Waitrose and Majestic.

I crossed the Channel to Brugges for our Belgium distributor's portfolio tasting. The chef/owner of t'Zwaantje (the Swan) restaurant, which pours Coleraine by the glass, told of treating his friends to Coleraine '98 at Georges V in Paris and described it as "the Petrus of New Zealand".

The highlight of my trip had to be Moscow. What a city! A remarkable mix, it's monumental in scale and vision, with flashes of great beauty. I felt very much the "rock star" being escorted around the city with a translator and a bodyguard in an armour plated BMW complete with bullet proof privacy glass! While total wine consumption is still small here, it is the fastest growing fine wine market in the world. Prices are astronomical (Coleraine is \$300 a bottle) but more and more wealthy Russians are demanding the best of the West.

Last year John got the Chinese trip (invited for Air NZ's inaugural Shanghai flight) so, three years since my last visit, I got to go back. I made a very quick call to Beijing to ensure our distributors had plenty of Te Mata Estate in stock for the athletes to celebrate with, before heading to Shanghai. They certainly build quickly and I immediately noticed the differences to the skyline. We have some great supporters in Shanghai and any visitors should check out kiwi expat, Richard Xavia's Hamilton House, the smartest new restaurant in the city. My final night was a dinner at El Willy, a hugely popular place run by a completely mad, young Spanish chef. The neighbouring tables ordered eight bottles of Woodthorpe Sauvignon Blanc and Gamay Noir during the course of the evening. If that's typical of Shanghai, you had better get your order in fast if you want to enjoy some yourself!

- Nicholas Buck



Save the dates

The first week of March will be your opportunity to enjoy Coleraine '07. There is already much excitement about the release of the 2007 reds, and we will be travelling the country with these and the fresh 2008 whites.

Dates and venues are:

HAWKES BAY

Friday 27 February Te Mata Estate Winery

WELLINGTON

Tuesday 3 March Convention Centre

CHRISTCHURCH

Tuesday 3 March The George Hotel

AUCKLAND

Wednesday 4 March TBC

DUNEDIN

Thursday 5 March Dunedin Art Gallery

Please watch out for further details in our next Christmas mailer and coming soon on our website on www.temata.co.nz