

December
2006



isabel estate

Hello Everyone!

This year has been one of copious travel! As always, we are dedicated to supporting our importers around the world and are forever excited to talk with our customers about their impressions of our wines – hence extensive travels entailed.

April was the beginning of the touring season. Mike and Robyn joined the New Zealand Wine Fairs in North America for 2 months with a big finish in the UK, presenting a '10 years of Sauvignon Blanc' vertical tasting. It was a huge success with consumers expressing their pleasure for an aged Kiwi Sauvignon Blanc - due to this response, we are now organizing a second tasting opportunity of these beauties for our friends and family at the winery! Can't wait!

I had the pleasure of the next big trip, heading off first to my homeland, Canada, for both work and play followed by San Francisco and then Europe.

This year we participated in Wine NZ and were pleasantly reminded of our local support as well. Wait till you all try the next vintage!

In The Winery

Cheers, Stephanie

It has been a busy year in the winery... Pati and Mike finally conceded to bringing on a couple helping hands, and wow, what a difference.

You will be pleased to know that their friendly personalities have returned now that they are able to stow their cots! (Till next harvest, that is!)

Stefan was our first addition and he has taken on the bottling line like a third child. I don't think that machine has ever looked or sounded so good - and the recent bottling of aromatics was free of drama.

Jarred joined us last month as Assistant Winemaker and has quickly familiarized himself with the underground cellar sampling and analysing with pleasure - interesting how the barrels now require more regular topping up!

Jarred offers us extensive experience from working both over sea's and in his native NZ. Recent regions explored include Waiheke Island NZ, the Hunter

an extra 'juicy' quality needed to be both preserved and controlled. The elegance of our wines is a trait we are proud of - so retaining delicacy in our richly textured wines is a passion. 2006 is proving another delicious vintage - with just a bit more fruit packed in!

Even more good news for the vintage was our ability to achieve natural botrytis in our late harvest Sauvignon Blanc block. It has been 4 years since we have had a season suitable for our late harvest 'Noble Savage'.

Keep your eyes peeled next October for our delicious sticky... in the meantime, Jarred and I will make sure it is kept safe!



~Isabel's cellar door~

Valley and Margaret River of Australia and the Phalz in Germany.

Due to the warmer growing season of 2006, Mike and Patricia spent extra time in the winery to ensure the wines evolved as desired. The perfectly ripe fruit with

we're totally screwed...



estate grown
estate bottled

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In the Vineyard

Growing Season Temperature Averages in C°

Month	2005/06	04/05	03/04	02/03	01/02	Average
November	15.1	15.5	13.7	14.5	15.0	14.8
December	18.6	14.7	17.4	16.6	17.9	17.0
January	18.2	17.3	19.1	17.6	18.3	18.1
February	17.7	19.3	16.9	17.6	16.1	17.5
March	15.0	16.2	15.0	16.7	17.3	16.0

2006 will go down in the books as the warmest growing season since 1998. It was a welcome change for us staff, as lunching regularly on the patio was an absolute treat!

With the long growing season we were pleased to see our Pinot Noir receiving excellent 'attention'. We were able to keep leaf plucking to a minimum, protecting the grapes from the 'baked' effect, while still achieving complete ripeness. Our Sauvignon Blanc flavor profile seemed to be even more accentuated than usual and a unique 'all-spice' character surprised, and pleased, us all. Pinot Gris and Riesling both produced healthy crops from their respective blocks while the Chardon-

nay offered another harvest of concentrated flavors with ripe, pure fruit flavors sure to impress.

With knowledge that all our wines were going to be 'quite a mouth full' due to the warm season, time spent between picking and production was kept to a minimum - this ensured all the 'riches' were preserved. As we are dedicated to hand harvesting, fruit came into the vineyard in optimum condition, ready for the chosen method of fermentation.

Since Marlborough weather was so co-operative this year, rain staying

away both during important ripening stages and at the end of the season, we were able to finally produce late harvest Sauvignon Blanc! Samplings thus far suggest a dynamic wine to come.

Finally, I am happy to announce we have emerged in perfect condition from the 'frost-season'...which dragged all the way into December. Vines are healthy and ready to make us proud again!

Restaurant '06!

This year we joined our Australian Distributors, Mezzanine, in Sydney to attend Restaurant '06 at the Royal



~Restaurant '06 Exhibition~

Hall of Industries. It was the first year for this grand event and we were joined by fabulous food exhibitors and a cocktail bar complete with demonstrations.

The Mezzanine stand was well stocked with Kiwi and Aussie wine producers who all enjoyed sneaking in visits to the coffee, cheese and ice-cream stands!

Restaurant '06 proved quite a success, it was obvious that the organizers put a lot of effort into

the location and design - with exhibitors being carefully selected.

We enjoyed speaking with restaurateurs and hearing of the success Isabel was enjoying in their establishment— Thanks again Bambini Wine Bar for your amazing display of our Sauvignon Blanc!

Next year we will pack the suitcase with a few extra gems - maybe even an early glimpse at our 2006 Noble Sauvage...

Hope to see you there!

World Tour 2006 (well almost)

As mentioned in the foreword, 2006 was a year of much travel. Mike and Robyn joined the New Zealand wine fair's North American tour which took them to the corners of the large continent. They also squeezed in a portfolio tasting with our US importers, Adventures in Wine, while in California.

The Tiller's then crossed Canada with our new Distributors, Calibrium. The partnership proved a success and a few toasts were made

for "great things to come".

On their way home, Mike and Robyn went to the UK to present a 10 year vertical of our Sauvignon Blanc! It was an event not to be missed and the '97 Sauvignon Blanc came out as 'Best in Show' - finally proof that our Sauvignon Blanc is incredibly age worthy!

This year I enjoyed market visits as well, starting in Vancouver, Canada. It was great to remind all my favorite restaurants about Isabel—and even

better when the wines were added to their list! Next stop was San Francisco where days in the trade were equally successful, to say the least.

Europe followed and offered small challenges as my language studies failed me - it was like high school all over again! I participated in portfolio tastings in Belgium and Holland with some enlightening market visits in Germany - Thanks for having me! Next year, we intend to visit Asia.

Visitors to the Estate

This year we enjoyed a plethora of visits from around the world, and with our newly extended cellar door hours, we look forward to seeing even more of you.

For the 2006 harvest we welcomed Sommelier Robert Giorgione of Orrey Restaurant in London (formerly of 5th Floor Harvey Nichols) to assist us with winery work. 'Plunging the cap' will never be the same again!

Patricia and I enjoyed entertaining three charming men from Cecconi's in Melbourne last May—Leo & Ben Bortolotto and Alan Walton who



~Robert Giorgione working off his accommodation dues~

entertained us with stories of the restaurant business and the Italian way of life!

Also from Australia, we enjoyed a visit from

Sauvignon Blanc 2005. We were delighted when we later received a copy of the Vintage Cellars magazine which included a full page write-up on Isabel.

More socially, Richard & Victoria Oddy joined us from the UK after serving our wine at their Summer wedding! Congratulations again!

~Stephanie, Pati and the Cecconi boys~

Jeremy Stockman & Monty James from Vintage Cellars who honored us with a 'Top NZ Wine' accolade at their recent New Zealand tasting for our



Winemakers dinner, Wellington

Isabel Estate were asked by Regional Wine and Spirits to team up with Chow restaurant in Wellington for a Winemakers dinner. Chow is a fabulous restaurant that I have had the pleasure to dine at a couple of times. It boasts excellent reviews for their fresh and innovative cuisine.

Of course we happily accepted the proposal and Patricia felt her nerves emerge with full force... As Mike and Robyn were in the UK at this time, Pati was left on her own to explain 'all that is Isabel' in her gor-

geous Chilean accent. I got to tag along, pretending to do a little work here and there.

Chow creates Asian infused cuisine and we basked in the continuous flavor explosions. Better still, our wines enjoyed being deliciously paired with exotic and richly textured dishes - each varietal receiving time in the spotlight. We cer-

tainly enjoyed the evening and were pleased that the dinner enticed both old and new friends of Isabel.



~Isabel Estate supporters at Chow restaurant~

~Showing off our designer t-shirts at the harvest party~

Harvest '06 Party

Harvest is (one of) the most rewarding times of year for us winery folk! There are so many precarious times during the vineyard growing cycle that when harvest time finally draws near, we are reminded that all



the hard work was for a reason - and our passion and desire for special wine will once again be sated.

Although the hours are copious and feet ache by days end, beyond the personal satisfaction, there is an additional light at the end of the tunnel - the Harvest Party!

This years party was held at Brancott in Fairhall Downs. A gorgeous site situated at the foot of the Omaka hills. A huge tent

was set up with a stage up front with live bands performing! We were entertained by an ABBA cover band for an hour before the main attraction appeared, The Black Seeds - a fabulous Kiwi group.

Our fabulous vintage crew quickly settled onto the dance floor with Patricia leading the way - Luke, our Tiller representative for the evening, was definitely not far behind impressing us all with his 'abilities'!

Next year we intend to drag Mike and Robyn along too!



Isabel Photo Gallery!

What can I say.... I ran out of topics! Nah, I just thought we should take the opportunity to show off! Can you believe the amazing moments we have captured here at the winery this year?



New Baby on Board

Isabel Estate is thrilled to announce a new addition to our family. Our long time Cellar Hand Aaron Woodhouse and partner Raelene have welcomed a baby boy to their family.

Hunter Shane Aaron introduced himself to the world on April 20th weighing 6 lbs 14 ounces and stretching 23 inches long. He is a bundle of energy already and we have secured a position for him at the winery once he is a bit older!



Marlborough Wine Festival 2007

We look forward to participating in the Marlborough Wine Festival this February as we anticipate another successful event!

Last year our table was extremely busy throughout the day with many

'regulars' – an environment we look forward to duplicating again.

At Isabel we always try to highlight our point of difference. Back vintage tastings displays the age-worthiness of all 5 of the varietals we produce. Offering wine from our museum

stock at a fabulous local event is the ideal opportunity to make them available... something special for our neighbours. It has yet to be decided which wines we will pour this year, but I assure you, there will be a couple treats!

Can't wait to see you there!
February 10th, 2007 - 10am

New Zealand & Isabel Estate

For several years now we have been attempting to increase our production by purchasing parcels of land that are extensions of our Estate Vineyard - similar climate and soil type is mandatory to retain our 'Isabel' style. We are committed to only producing Estate wine, so this process has been a slow one.

We are pleased to have increased production enough now to enable us to offer a more significant allocation

to our own Country. Simultaneously, we recognized the need for a little 'assistance'!

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Preferred Ltd. as our new distributors for the north-of-Taupo area. Alecia Donald and Robert Ottosen, Preferred's Directors, offer over a decade of experience in the restaurant & hospitality industry ensuring our wines are offered in the finest establishments of Auckland and beyond.

In Christchurch and Queenstown we are represented by Emma Ferguson, who's background in fine dining has secured excellent relationships with the local restaurateurs.

On the home front, Marlborough's wine trail continues to receive increased numbers of visitors and we are excited to extend our Cellar Door hours to include Saturdays.

Hope to see you soon!

Cheers

Cellar Door Now Open
Monday thru Saturday 11am - 4pm