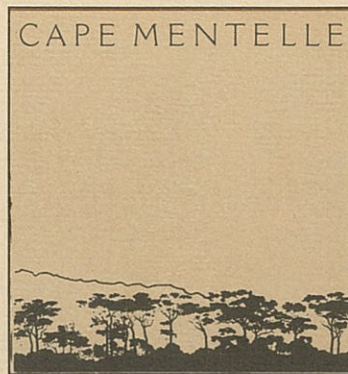


**NEW ZEALAND**  
 CAPE MENTELLE  
 NEW ZEALAND LIMITED  
 P.O. BOX 376  
 BLENHEIM  
 NEW ZEALAND  
 TELEPHONE: (57) 28914  
 FAX: 57 28065

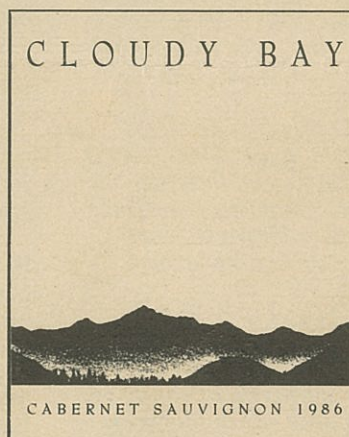
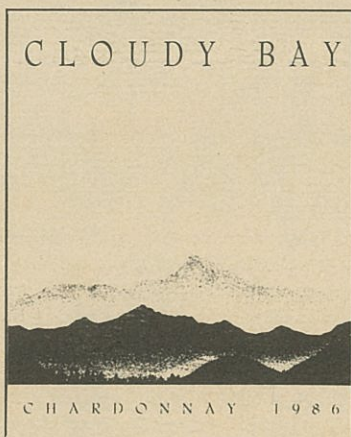
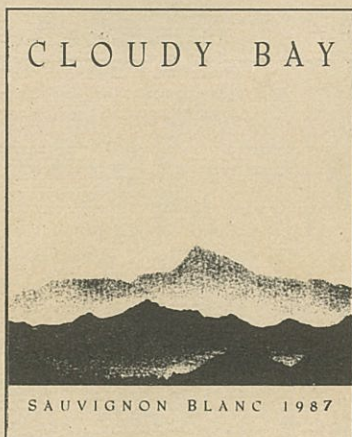


**AUSTRALIA**  
 CAPE MENTELLE  
 VINEYARDS LIMITED  
 P.O. BOX 110  
 MARGARET RIVER  
 WESTERN AUSTRALIA 6285  
 TELEPHONE: (097) 57 2070  
 FAX: 572770

# MENTELLE NOTES

March, 1988

The newsletter of Cloudy Bay and Cape Mentelle.



## A Terrific Trifecta

**I**n this our first ever New Zealand edition of 'Mentelle Notes' we are pleased to announce the release of three wines from the Cloudy Bay stable.

One of these wines, the Cloudy Bay 1987 Sauvignon Blanc, has in fact been on the market for some months now and we feel we owe an apology to those readers who, like us, anticipated that our newsletter would be published in the same month as the wine was released. Alas, despite our best intentions, we were unable to do this because of the eccentric and undisciplined work habits of our Australian-based editor who having wagered heavily, and lost, on the outcome of the Bledisloe Cup match, refused temporarily to have anything to do with a publication due to be circulated in the land of the All Blacks.

However, having watched with glee the havoc Michael Fay and his colleagues have created in California over the America's Cup Challenge our editor has, at long last, reappraised his view of the Shaky Isles and publication of this edition coincides with the release of the Cloudy Bay 1986 Chardonnay and the Cloudy Bay 1986 Cabernet Sauvignon.

The 1987 Sauvignon Blanc has already gained a reputation, and some notoriety, in New Zealand and also in Australia and the U.K. The limited stocks have all sold out very quickly causing Melbourne writer Mark Shield to declare that "Announcing that the Cloudy Bay has been released is like tossing a bleeding chop into a bucket of piranhas: it doesn't last very long". We have, at the risk of offending our good friends in the wine trade, kept limited stocks of the 1987 Sauvignon Blanc at the winery specifically for mail order customers and these will be sold on a first come first served basis.

Despite the poor vintage conditions in Marlborough where, for the second year in a row, we had heavy rains as the fruit was being picked, the 1987 wine is very similar in style to its predecessors. It has the powerful and distinctive fruit flavour so characteristic of New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc which jumps out of the glass with a force and intensity that would make an All Black scrum forward proud. These fruit characters are carried through to the palate which provides a mouthful of flavour reminiscent of lychees and other tropical fruits.

Winemakers David Hohnen and Kevin Judd, who don't get much time to watch

rugby these days, describe the wine in the following terms:—

*"The 1987 Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc has an intense and complex aroma combining the characteristics of blackcurrants, lychees and passionfruit with hints of fresh oak. The palate has mouthfilling fruit salad characters followed by a distinctive long, lingering finish and delicious crisp acidity."*

Like previous Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc releases this wine is delicious to drink by itself or as a complement to just about any chicken or seafood dish. John Hoare, one of our growers in Blenheim, who also makes a fortune out of selling us vineyard land, thinks it goes well with caviar while lesser mortals, with smaller budgets, have found it particularly enjoyable with green lipped mussels or freshly caught trout — especially fish you have just pulled from the water yourself.

The release of the Cloudy Bay 1986 Chardonnay is an important milestone for us and represents the first release of a variety which we believe will quickly become as important to the Cloudy Bay reputation as

CONTINUED

Sauvignon Blanc has been to date. Indeed some measure of the importance we attach to our chardonnay is that despite the howls of protest and screams of anguish from our long suffering bankers we have held this wine off the market until now to allow it to develop to its optimum. Most people, except those unfortunate enough to be bankers, would agree that the wait has been worthwhile.

The result is a full bodied style of chardonnay in which all the components are beautifully integrated. The heady bouquet is reminiscent of melon, ripe peaches and nuts with traces of the 'smoky' element of burnt toast. The palate is packed full of fruit flavour while the oak treatment adds complexity and character without overpowering the fruit. The weighty body and elongated palate structure enable the wine to be savoured long after swallowing making it both a meal in itself and the perfect accompaniment to any seafood or white meat dish.

Winemakers David Honen and Kevin Judd describe it in the following terms:—

*"The Cloudy Bay 1986 Cabernet Sauvignon exhibits ripe, cassis berry on the nose with distinctive varietal character and fresh aromatic oak. The palate is medium bodied and has intense cherry like fruit flavours that carry through into a long flavoursome finish."*

Alas, as with all the finer things in life, only very limited amounts of the Cloudy Bay Chardonnay are available and we expect the small quantities of stock we currently have available to sell out very quickly. Although this wine is ready to drink now it will, with further development, take on additional complexity and is a wine that will well reward those with the patience and self control to keep it in their cellar for a while.

The Cloudy Bay 1986 Cabernet Sauvignon is our first ever red wine release under the Cloudy Bay label. Despite this, it is not a wine without a history and its lineage could probably be traced back to the Cabernet Sauvignon wines Cape Mentelle has been producing at Margaret River in Western Australia since 1977. Certainly many of the techniques and most of the tricks used in the production of this wine were first developed at Margaret River. Nevertheless the Cloudy Bay Cabernet Sauvignon is unmistakably a New Zealand wine and bears little resemblance to its bigger, more full bodied cousins from across the Tasman.

The fruit for this wine was grown at the Riverbrook Vineyard just across the road from the Cloudy Bay winery and the rich, blackcurrant and cassis flavour puts to rest the myth that all cool climate New Zealand red wines are thin and "stalky". Winemakers David Honen and Kevin Judd who, despite the urgings of your correspondent, are not into myths, describe the wine in the following fashion:—

*"The Cloudy Bay 1986 Chardonnay has powerful aromatics with peach-like aromas integrated with toasty, barrel fermentation character. The palate is full bodied with mouthfilling fruit flavours complemented by new French oak.*

*The finish is long and lingering with fresh, crisp acidity."*

Although drinking well now this wine will also benefit from further ageing. It goes well with pasta, meat and game dishes and is particularly good with cheese.

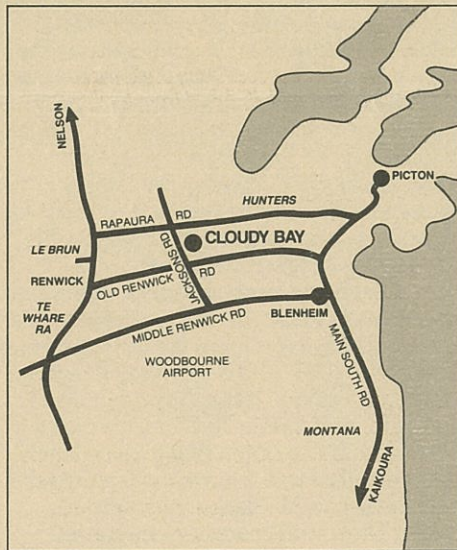
## COME TO MARLBOROUGH COUNTRY

Our cellar door sales and tasting room at the Cloudy Bay winery is now open and ready to receive visitors from 10am - 4.30pm Monday to Saturday.

Tours of the winery can be arranged but we can always appreciate receiving advance warning from anyone wishing to inspect the winery so that we can ensure the necessary staff are on hand.

Marlborough is increasingly being recognised as New Zealand's premier wine producing region and, as the map shows, the Cloudy Bay winery is close to most of the other leading producers in the region.

Also close at hand are most of the attractions and activities for which Marlborough is renowned world wide — the beautiful sheltered waters of Marlborough Sounds, the snowcapped ski slopes of Rainbow, trout laden streams, cherry orchards, majestic scenery and, of course, some of the most hospitable and friendly people in New Zealand.



Cloudy Bay Winery  
Jacksons Road  
Rapaura  
Phone (57) 28 914

## CAPE MENTELLE SOLD

Cape Mentelle Limited and its subsidiary Cape Mentelle (New Zealand) Limited which operates the Cloudy Bay winery has been sold. Apex Pacific Limited, formerly the major shareholder in the Cape Mentelle operation sold its shareholding to interests associated with the company's winemaker, and only other shareholder, David Hohnen as part of a management buy out agreement.

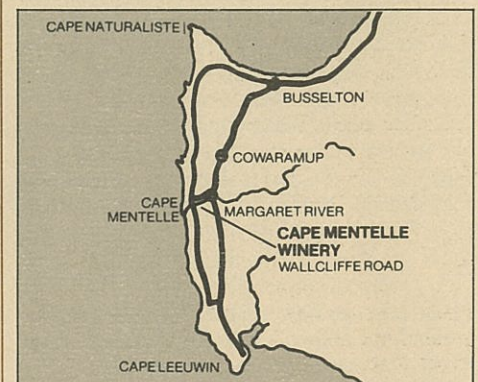
The ever laconic David Hohnen said the change in ownership would make no difference to the day to day management of either the Cloudy Bay or Cape Mentelle winery but did confess that he may have to start being nicer to his bankers. He strongly denied suggestions by 'Mentelle Notes' that he would soon appear in T.V. commercials for the company proclaiming that he liked the product so much he decided to buy the company.

## MARGARET RIVER

Kiwi readers of 'Mentelle Notes' who venture across the Tasman are always welcome at the Cape Mentelle winery in Margaret River.

The winery is located in the heart of the wine producing region about mid way between the surf and the pub! Also close at hand are the caves, forests, beaches and other wineries for which Margaret River is famous.

The winery is open for visitors from 10am - 4pm every day.



Cape Mentelle Winery  
Wallcliffe Road  
Margaret River, W.A. 6285  
Telephone (097) 57 2070

# Mentelle Notes

## interviews David Hohnen

A spring weekend in Margaret River. Driven by an unquenchable thirst – only for newsworthy stores to fill these columns of course – “Mentelle Notés” roving reporter ended up on the front verandah of the House of Hohnen. The sun was sinking into the ocean west of the winery, the beer was ice cold and the man who has been described as being “laconic to the point of indifference” was in an expansive mood. Naturally your ever diligent correspondent was in his usual disorganised state and had neither notebook nor tape recorder with him. However, thanks to some highly selective recall here are excerpts from their conversation with expletives and references to the company’s bankers deleted.

*1987 was your tenth vintage at Cape Mentelle. Looking back over a decade of trials and tribulations which ones stand out the most?*

In terms of trials the 1981 vintage takes the jackpot. The two previous vintages had been good and we were looking forward to a third which would set us up on a much firmer financial footing. Then came the storms during spring and what looked like it was going to be a bumper crop was cut in half with drastic consequences for our budget.

As for the tribulations, without a doubt our finest hour was when our untrained, unfit and slightly inebriated softball team scored its first crushing victory over the might of Leeuwin Estate in our annual softball competition. It was a triumph of the “pursuit of laid back” over the “pursuit of excellence” and it felt great.

*Modern day viticulture began in the Margaret River region only 20 years ago. Obviously there has been a lot of trial and error in the development of the wine industry here. Do you think it has reached its full potential yet?*

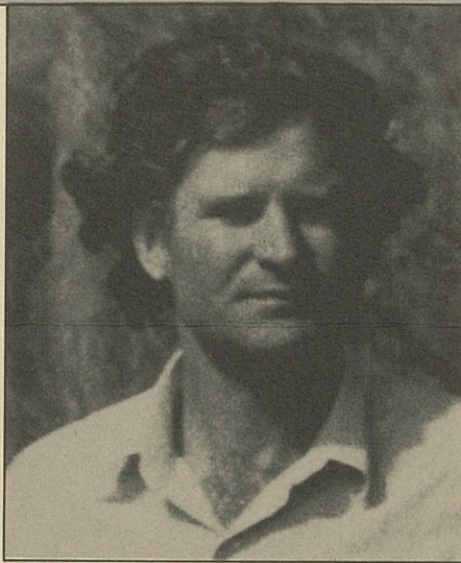
It has yet to reach its full potential in terms of either quantity or quality. Market forces will determine quantity as there is no foreseeable limit to the amount of land available for viticulture. Quality will improve as we adapt our viticulture and oenology to suit our special environment. It will take many years to achieve this and the changes will not be obvious in the short term but certainly we have yet to see the best of Margaret River.

*Cape Mentelle has acquired its reputation largely on the strength of its cabernet sauvignon. Yet you consistently claim that you have yet to produce your best ever. Which is the best Cape Mentelle cabernet?*

I recall a similar question posed some years ago to someone else and the answer they gave is appropriate. The beer drinking champion of the U.S.A was asked, “Which is the best beer?” His answer after some reflection, “The next one”. In terms of the evolving Cape Mentelle Cabernet style, look to the current release and the ’86 vintage.

*In the past you have blended a little shiraz or zinfandel with your cabernet but in recent years you have produced only 100% cabernet sauvignon. Many critics, particularly in the U.K., say cabernet on its own is too intense and that a more complex wine – the result of a blend – is more desirable. What do you think?*

We have found that by harvesting our cabernet fruit in three or four stages of ripeness we can produce wines with distinctly different fruit characters. With that experience we can now blend what we believe to be very complete and satisfactory wines from the one variety. I think even the Poms will love it.



David Hohnen reacting in typical fashion to one of the editor’s jokes.

*South Australians, Victorians and the English, but not the Scots, have always questioned the ability of Margaret River wines to stand the test of time. How has your cabernet stood up over the years?*

A quick scan of our cellaring recommendations will answer that question. Recently we had a gathering of the people associated with the region’s first producers of cabernet, namely Cullens, Moss Wood, Vasse Felix and ourselves. We tasted successive vintages of cabernets we had produced, the oldest being a ’73 Moss Wood. It was a wonderful collection of wines. The older wines had reached a plateau in terms of development but not yet showed any sign of toppling over to be downgraded to barbecue baste.

*Your vineyard manager Brenton Air claims that the fruit coming off Cape Mentelle’s vineyards is so good that even a drover’s dog could make outstanding wine with it. Apart from having Australia’s highest paid vineyard manager what else are you doing in the vineyard to ensure you get the quality of fruit you need?*

You neglected to mention that Brenton can also dance and sing.

In the vineyard we are developing trellis and training systems that will give us better fruit composition in terms of the sugar/acid ratio and flavour characteristics. We are installing supplementary irrigation so that we will not get stress in drought years. I expect to use mechanical harvesting, when budgets permit, as our experience in NZ shows that it will considerably enhance our ability to produce better quality fruit.

*The quality of Margaret River semillon and particularly the blends of semillon and sauvignon blanc are beginning to make a few people sit up and take notice. Do you think Margaret River semillon or semillon blends will ever surpass the reputation of the Hunter Valley for this variety?*

Do they grow semillon in the Hunter Valley? Jokes aside. When I think of the Hunter Valley I think of Murray Tyrell. When I think of Murray I think of hot air. Did you know that the Hunter Valley is now

famous for its Hot Air Ballooning? Margaret River will always be more famous for its semillon than its balloons.

*The French criticise “new world” winemakers like yourself for producing wines which taste better alone than they do with food. Do you think this is a fair comment?*

It’s all in the interpretation of what the Frogs say. What they mean is that their own wines are generally so insipid that it’s best to take them with good food. Then at least there is something to talk about. Funny people the French.

*You obviously enjoy a glass of wine or two and you are now on your second can of beer, yet you are almost as handsome and healthy looking as I am. How do you do it?*

Well, I don’t know how you do it, but in my case moderation is the key.

There is no doubt in my mind that excessive alcohol consumption has a harmful effect on health. But there is also a considerable amount of evidence to suggest that mild to moderate consumption of alcohol may have positive health benefits and reduces mortality particularly in relation to heart disease. While I would support any attempt to reduce the abuse of alcohol we should not lose sight of the fact that alcohol, and wine especially, has social benefits. It helps people enjoy themselves, improves social interaction and enhances the pleasure of just about any meal – except breakfast, airline meals or lunch with the Chairman when the stockmarket has dropped!

*Turning now to Cloudy Bay do you think the current popularity of New Zealand sauvignon blanc is just a fad that will eventually fade?*

New Zealand sauvignon blanc is certainly enjoying “fad” popularity at the moment. It is good enough to survive this phase and become an attractive part of any wine buyer’s selection along with for example, Cabernet from Margaret River, Rhine Riesling from Mt. Barker and even Semillon from the Hunter Valley.

*There is some very nice chardonnay sitting in the winery at Cloudy Bay. Do you think the Marlborough region will become better known for its chardonnay than its sauvignon blanc?*

How many times do I have to tell you that we do not make nice wines! To answer your question, it’s too early to say. I am sure that we will make very good chardonnay similar in style to the best from California which are distinguished by their sheer volume of fresh aromatics and full flavour.

*If you and your good lady, Sandy were stranded on a desert island and were allowed only two bottles of wine you had made what would they be?*

I would be very disappointed if I was allowed only two bottles of wine for a start. That would last us just two days. So I hope you can arrange a quick rescue as well as a bigger selection of wine. The ’85 Semillon Blend and the ’82 Cabernet would do while we waited to be rescued.

The ’85 semillon blend demonstrated better than any other vintage what we have been trying to achieve with our dry white blend. It has bags of flavour lots of complexity, firm tannins and good acid levels. A great wine that has continued to improve with age. Mark Shield said that if they ever bottled Beethoven’s 5th Symphony our ’82 cabernet would be the wine. Hence we would take that because most desert islands don’t have a stereo.

*Now the interview is over shall we have one more before dinner?*

Yes, by all means, have another can, but I would now like you to answer one question. You have been described as “looking like a failed Perth businessman”, you are becoming more eccentric, more undisciplined and your stories get worse as you get older, yet four times a year you manage to produce an occasionally eloquent and sometimes even funny edition of “Mentelle Notes”. How do you do it?

1981 Zinfandel

# PRICE LIST & ORDER FORM

WINE	DESCRIPTION	PRICE PER DOZEN	PRICE PER BOTTLE	AMOUNT ORDERED	COST
Cloudy Bay 1987 Sauvignon Blanc	Tropical fruit salad nose, mouth filling flavour, fresh crisp acidity	\$168.52	\$14.04		
Cloudy Bay 1986 Chardonnay	Peach and smoky aroma, mouth filling flavour, long lingering finish. Complex and classy.	\$257.77	\$21.48		
Cloudy Bay 1986 Cabernet Sauvignon	Ripe cassis and blackcurrant nose, medium bodied palate with nice oak and cherry fruit flavour.	\$187.64	\$15.63		
Mixed Dozen	Four bottles of each of the above wines.	\$206.55			

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
(PLEASE PRINT. WE HAVE A MYOPIC BEAN COUNTER!)

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

POSTCODE \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE No. \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

### REMITTANCE DETAILS

CHEQUE/P.O. NOTE  BANKCARD  VISACARD

MASTERCHARGE

No. 

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VALID UNTIL \_\_\_\_\_

ADD FREIGHT COSTS (SEE BELOW)  
AND PACKING CHARGE (IF APPLICABLE)

TOTAL

### FREIGHT CHARGES

	1st case	2nd case
Auckland	\$7.00	\$5.00
Wellington	\$3.00	\$2.00
North Island Provincial	\$8.00	\$6.00
Christchurch	\$3.00	\$2.00
South Island Provincial	\$6.00	\$4.00

### PLEASE NOTE

- Orders must be in case lots.
- Make up your own mixed dozen combination using the prices above plus \$2.75 for packing (including G.S.T) costs.

S1	TO SOUTH ISLAND				TO NORTH ISLAND						
	TO:	S	T	X&Y	S	A	A	D	E	B	C
V. I. C.	BLENDHEIM PICTON NELSON TAKAKA WESTPORT GREYMOUTH	ASHBURTON TIMARU DANMORU DUNEDIN	HORTICA CANTERBURY OTAGO SOUTHLAND	GRANITY KARAMEA COLLINGWOOD	WELLINGTON HUTT VALLEY PORIRUA	TARANAKI WANGANUI MANAWATU HAWKES BAY LEVIN WAIKAPAPA	GISBORNE Wairoa TE POUHE	WAIKATO BAY OF PLENTY COROMANDEL PUREKONE WAIKARE	AUCKLAND ALBANY HAMILTON TE ANAHEITU KING COUNTY	NORTHLAND MELBESVILLE GREYVA	
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
0293m	5.50	7.50	9.50	9.50	7.50	9.60	13.75	13.75	13.45	14.50	