

MENTELLE NOTES

THE NEWSLETTER OF CLOUDY BAY AND CAPE MENTELLE

The Joy of Scents

Increasingly New Zealand is winning an international reputation for its aromatic wines. Bob Campbell MW ponders their origins.

I was invited to write *A History of Aromatic Grape Varieties in New Zealand*, a subject that ranks alongside *Cultivar-specific Patterns of Polyphenolic Constituents in Wines from Northern China* as a topic of high reader interest.

Many writers might have found this topic daunting. Fortunately I am a direct descendant of the Marquis of Argyle (Family Motto: 'Ah'm no mean, just careful', Family Crest: Two Hands on a Rampant Cock), a man who would rise to any challenge no matter how boring.

Let's begin. There is no official definition of an aromatic grape variety. The Wine Institute of New Zealand lists aromatic grape varieties as: muscat, Müller-Thurgau, gewürztraminer, riesling, sauvignon blanc and pinot gris.

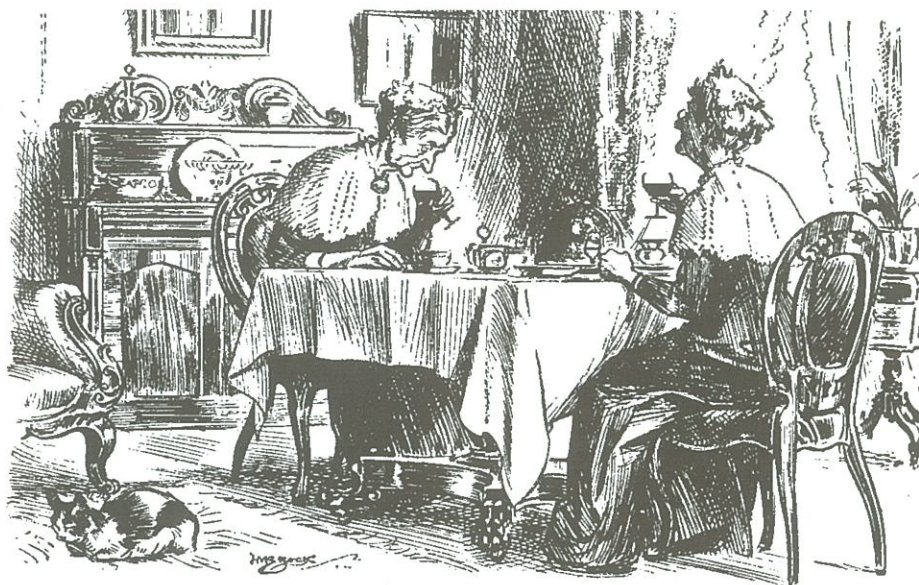
Penfolds claims that semillon is also an aromatic grape variety but we can view that judgment with some suspicion on the grounds that 'big is not always right unless it is physically threatening'.

In a ground-breaking move I have defined an aromatic grape variety as: **A grape variety that is highly aromatic.** This definition excludes semillon unless there is a knock at the door and I am confronted by a grinning Penfolds security officer holding an iron bar.

Out of the Darkness

The dark ages of New Zealand wine began in the Pleistocene period and ended in 1973, when coincidentally, I began a career in the wine industry. Prior to that time New Zealand's vineyards were planted with American hybrid grape varieties.

They were resistant to disease and produced enormous crops. Sadly, the resulting wine was extremely acidic



'I'm bugged if I can smell gooseberries.'

and tasted as though a fox had died and decomposed in the vat. Wine drinkers didn't complain because the wine was cheap, there were only five of them and they were all direct descendants of the Marquis of Argyle.

In an effort to improve wine quality, so that they and their families might be able to drink their own wine, winemakers boldly decided to plant a new grape variety. The choice was simple.

'There is no official definition of an aromatic grape variety.'

Question: Which grape variety thrives in a cool climate, crops heavily, and tastes better than Baco 22A. Answer: Müller-Thurgau, the workhorse grape of Germany which was systematically destroying that country's fine wine image.

Müller-Thurgau made light, semi-sweet wines with fake German names (slogan: 'Fresh and fruity, you little beauty!') that were a great success. Beer drinkers emptied their tankards of Lion Red and filled them with muscat-scented wine, secure in the knowledge that they would not be labelled as a pootah. An aromatic grape variety had thus laid the foundation for New Zealand's wine boom.

The Revolution Continues

Meanwhile, in Gisborne, a creative, non-conformist called Denis Irwin of Matawhero fame introduced the nation to gewürztraminer. Irwin would later be nominated for 'Young Tearaway of the Year Award' by *Winestate* when he was thrown out of the pub while celebrating his birthday. That would have been an unremarkable incident except that Denis owned the pub. Irwin made many New Zealanders sit up (and a few lie down) with his powerful, pungent wines.

Continued page 2

NEW
RELEASES

PALATE PLEASERS

It has been a long, hot summer in Marlborough, weeks without rain and soaring temperatures. Any viticulturist will tell you this makes for thirsty grapes and even thirstier winemakers. Of course the former take their moisture as water, the latter preferring other chilled beverages – and not necessarily those you might first imagine.

What better way to celebrate the last days of an Indian summer than with a refreshing glass of Chardonnay paired with salmon and dill salad, or a spicy, zesty aromatic Gewürztraminer sipped slowly as the sun sets, pondering Denis Irwin's aromatic Alsatian legacy?

Cloudy Bay Chardonnay 1999

'Cloudy Bay Chardonnay 1999 exudes rich aromas of melon and grapefruit together with soft, spicy notes from barrel fermentation and ageing. The palate is full-bodied and textural, showing ripe citrus flavours complemented by nutty, yeasty characters finishing with a flinty, mineral edge. Delicious drinking at release, this Chardonnay will repay cellaring for two to four years.'

Cloudy Bay Chardonnay 1995

'The benefit of four years bottle age can be seen in this re-release of the 1995 Chardonnay. Fresh characters of melon and citrus have evolved into dried fig and apricot layered with complexing flavours of oatmeal and lightly roasted nuts. The palate has gained depth, showing a pleasant chalky texture and long and lingering creamy finish.' [Mailing list only.]

PINOT PUSH

You could be forgiven for thinking that New Zealand's winemakers have become rather addicted to that beguiling Burgundy grape, pinot noir. They paraded their very best at the recent Pinot Noir 2001 conference to a captivated audience led by international figures Jancis Robinson, Robert Drouhin and California's Jim Clendenen, many agreeing that the Kiwi climate, soils and passion for this seductive grape all pointed to pinot becoming New Zealand's flagship red variety.

To continue the pressure, Cloudy Bay is hosting the second **Pinot at Cloudy Bay** celebration on **Saturday 23 June**. It is a day when you can immerse your palate in some of the world's greatest pinot noirs, flagship 1998 vintage wines from producers including Au Bon Climat, Domaine Comte de Vogüé, Coldstream Hills; a Martinborough brace, and of course the home contender, Cloudy Bay.

The tasting, held in the winery, is followed by an informal lunch on the winery lawns accompanied by all the pinots. Sample delicious Marlborough produce and savour the intriguing wines while discussing the nuances of this bewitching variety.

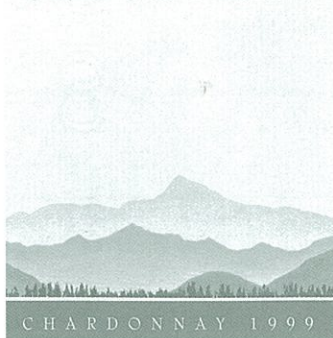
Confirmed pinotphiles should book early to avoid disappointment.

Tickets are NZ\$180 (tasting & lunch). Complete the enclosed registration form and fax or mail to Cloudy Bay at Freeport 87, Blenheim or contact Anna Griffiths PH (03) 520 9140 FAX (03) 520 9040. email: pinot@cloudybay.co.nz. For accommodation ideas check www.destinationmarlborough.co.nz

'The red wine highlight of the year was Cloudy Bay's salubrious pinot event.'

KEITH STEWART, THE LISTENER

CLOUDY BAY



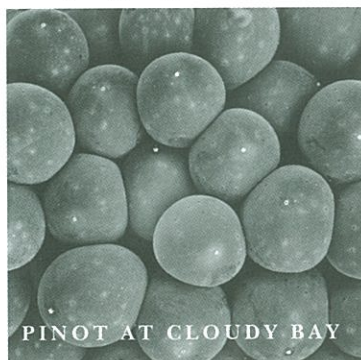
Cloudy Bay Gewürztraminer 1999

Cloudy Bay's gesture to New Zealand's aromatic stable:

'Cloudy Bay Gewürztraminer 1999 displays floral and lychee aromas underpinned by hints of musk. The softly textured, persistent palate complements the wine's aromatic seductive personality that finishes with a pleasant dry twist.' [Cellar door & mailing list only.]

Cloudy Bay Pinot Noir 1999

'The fragrance of ripe cherries and plums is complemented by a rich spiciness in this tantalising wine. The palate is bursting with sweet flavours of dark fruits and toasty oak. Soft tannins impart an intriguing chalkiness to the texture of the wine and give firmness to the lingering fruity finish.'



PINOT AT CLOUDY BAY



Meet Eveline Fraser...

JOY OF SCENTS cont...

At around the same time a tin shed in Swanson near Henderson held a ticking bomb that would eventually leave its mark in the world wine market. The ticking came from an airlock on a 500 litre puncheon of fermenting sauvignon blanc juice. Matua Valley had pioneered New Zealand's signature wine.

Time and the sometimes excessive consumption of pinot noir has dimmed my memory but the earliest recollection I have of New Zealand riesling is the exciting vibrant wine made by Collard Brothers. Geoff Collard had acquired a passion for the variety after working for a top producer in Germany's Mosel Valley.

Pinot gris is now hailed as a new and highly fashionable grape variety in this country. I have a bottle of Cooks Pinot Gris 1975 that probably passed its 'Best By' date in 1976. Both pinot gris and Cooks faded out of sight, with the former rising phoenix-like in recent years.

Scents and Scentuality

Aromatic grape varieties produce the white wines for which New Zealand is most famous. Müller-Thurgau has joined muscat in the closet allowing sauvignon blanc, riesling and now pinot gris and gewürztraminer to strut their powerful, pungent New Zealand-ness.

Why are New Zealand's aromatic varieties so intensely, well...aromatic? One Marlborough winemaker suggested that high levels of ultra-violet light which beams down through our large atmospheric hole produces greater fruit intensity in aromatic grape varieties.

'Bollocks' responded the learned viticulturist, Dr David Jordan. The mystery continues but the fact remains – New Zealand's aromatic wines deliver more scents and 'scentuality' than the wines from any other country, especially China.

Bob Campbell's well honed hooter often judges wines, and reports regular discoveries in Cuisine. He claims he gets joy from other sensual pursuits too.

TRUE BREW

Mentelle Notes readers may recall the Stein Fairy who used to pay regular visits to the winery, especially during vintage. She was a benevolent pixie very fondly regarded by the cellar crew.

Imagine their delight when they learned that the newly recruited winemaker, Eveline Fraser, started her beverage career as a brewer! The first woman to hold this title in NZ, she spent five years in brew houses in Auckland and Wellington. In 1985 her team won the world's best lager award – for Steinlager.

Then she gave up malt and hops for grapes. Eveline's winemaking stretches from the Swan Valley in Western Australia to France and New Zealand, eight years experience which recently led to her appointment to the winemaking team at Cloudy Bay.

Body Parts

Celebrated Australian author Morris Gleitzman has agreed to 'go Mentelle' – again. Grab a glass and get ready for a laugh...

I would like to dedicate this column to a part of my body that has given me a lot of pleasure over the years. I don't usually draw attention to it in public because, frankly, it's not much to look at. It's sort of floppy, a bit wrinkled, not large, and spends most of its time tucked away in the dark.

I showed it to a female winemaker once and she wasn't impressed. But I wouldn't be without the little fella for quids. And so, with your indulgence, I'd like to say a big thank you to my palate.

My palate's been giving me pleasure for as long as I can remember. Freud's theory of infant sexuality and wine appreciation is spot on as far as I'm concerned. Even as a breast-fed baby I was keenly aware of the delightful mouth-feel of a good vintage.

And Mum was great. As soon as she realised how much I appreciated proper sugar/acid balance, she tripled her consumption of Mars Bars and gherkins. Sadly though, she remembers me as a difficult baby. I think it was the time we saw a French tourist breastfeeding her baby and I tried to set up a comparative tasting.

School was a shock to a youngster with an active palate, a youngster who had first experienced the heady taste of American oak while he was still teething. (My uncle had a wooden leg.)

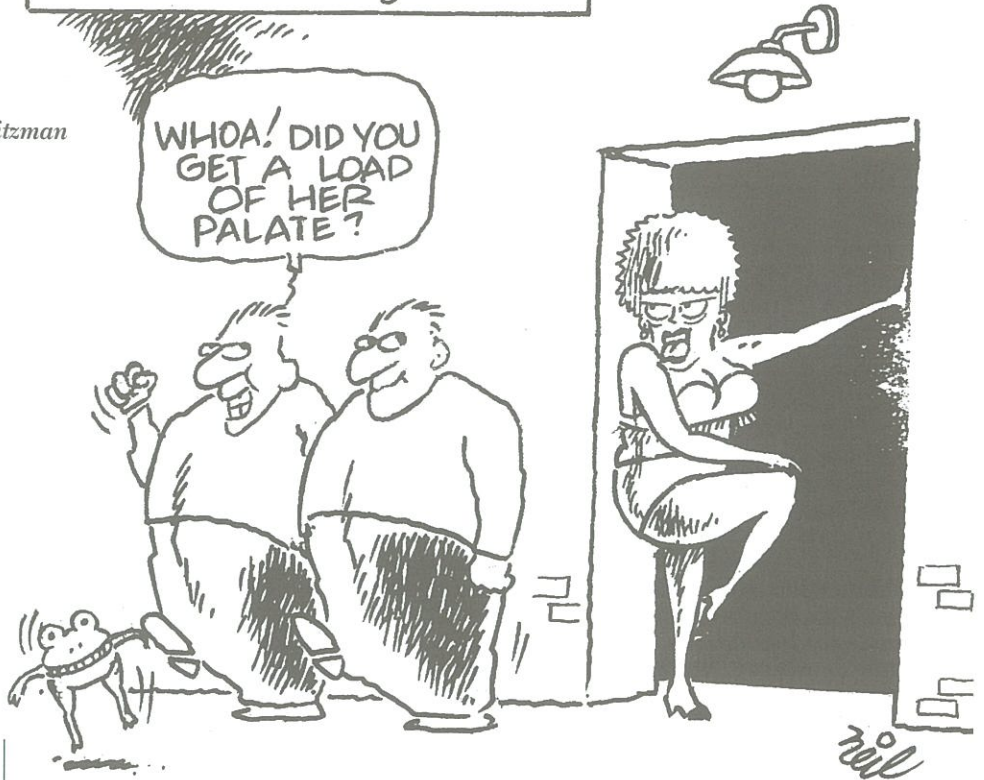
In those repressed days, teachers seemed unaware that kids even had palates. I still shudder at the memory of Mrs Prothero in the sick bay giving me a spoonful of cough medicine which was not only corked, but the menthol had completely failed to integrate with the pseudoephedrine hydrochloride.

Kids will be kids though, and soon a group of us early developers was experimenting behind the bike sheds. We tasted everything we could get our hands on – wine gums, champagne lettuce, trifle from Ryan Webster's lunchbox that he swore had traces of sherry in it, which worried us a bit because that was the name of their poodle.

And there was all the usual boasting. Dougie Cunningham claimed to have tasted every vintage of Grange from 1958 to 1972. We were dubious because it was only 1963 at the time.

There was so much skiting, in fact, that when I finally tasted real wine (when Auntie Bev licked her hankie and wiped my mouth after drinking a glass of red), none of the other kids would believe me. Not until I showed

Wine buffs in Kings Cross



them the hankie. And then instead of congratulating me on losing my virginity, they spent the rest of playtime arguing about whether it was a Coonawarra cabernet or a Hunter blend.

Meanwhile, there was the usual guilt as well. For quite a few years I used to lie awake at night, tossing and turning, wracked by the fear that if I drank wine on my own I'd go blind. Thank God for Mr Nielsen, my gym teacher, and his honest answers to my urgent questions.

No, you couldn't get drunk just from reading a wine label. Yes, nocturnal emissions were quite normal, particularly if the cork was faulty. No, solo drinking couldn't make you go blind unless it was champagne and you opened it with the bottle pointing at your head.

And then the late '60s arrived. What a time to be a teenager with a free and unfettered palate. (My orthodontic braces had just been removed and I was still reeling from the discovery that not all rieslings were metallic.) I embraced all the sensual ideologies of the era.

‘Nocturnal emissions were quite normal, particularly if the cork was faulty.’

Make love, not war. Make quality dry table wines, not flagons of sparkling sauternes. I'll never forget being at Woodstock in '69. Not the music festival, the winery. What a blast. Three days of peace, love and shiraz.

Looking back now, I've got a lot to thank my palate for.

It's not the most impressive palate in the world, but it's always risen to the occasion when I've needed it to. Well, mostly.

There was that embarrassing first date at my partner's place when I tried to impress her by naming the grape and the region without looking at the bottle and I didn't even get the state right. First night nerves, she murmured understandingly, especially considering the fact that we were drinking beetroot juice.

And so, dear palate, we've reached that time of life when we're both starting to sag a bit. You're still a joy to have around, but you're not quite as perky as you once were.

Nowadays if you're to perform at your best you can't be rushed. To do justice to a complex vintage you need a bit of seducing. A good meal first, perhaps, and soft music, and low lights, and sex.

It's OK, old friend, I understand. Don't worry, I won't subject you to the indignity that so many men in their forties resort to. That's right, wine porn. Poor souls, not daring to let a drop pass their lips without first devouring the lurid prose on the back label.

Pert buds...pendulous fruit...supple, fleshy, penetrative aromas with lingering juicy melon essences aching to explode in the mouth and the capital city wine shows...

I'm sorry, my palate's getting over-excited. How embarrassing. Excuse me while I have a cold shower and some sherry trifle.

Such was the response to Morris's previous column MN's ed was forced to give Kerry Packer a call – to advise that all negotiations were off. Gleitzman had taken MN's seductive bait and signed on exclusively. So you can look forward to more of his highly guggable columns.

The Art of Wine

Berry, melon, peach. Dust, pepper and cat's piss. Add some butter and yeasty dough and you have a few of the ingredients in a wine taster's terminology. Today's newspaper informs me about a pinot noir with a nose of 'vanilla, black cherry, plum and chocolate' and my innocent friend empties a can of pitted cherries, vanilla essence, a Violet Crumble and a prune (because it's winter) into a blender, then tries to assess his mock wine.

Are we able to capture the essence of wine with just a few descriptors? Is this what wine is really about?

Well, it is possible to see the fleeting scents of the fruits of Eden within wine, however it is a far more complex beast than just a few blackberries.

Apart from being 75%-90% water, wine contains literally thousands of chemical components. There are the alcohols, especially ethanol which lends a slight sweetness, viscosity and the ultimate mystery of wine – its reaction with the human nervous system!

There are also other alcohols – octanol, an important cabernet aroma; the rose-imbued 2-phenethanol; tea-like ho-trienol; and linalool, one of the beguiling aromas of riesling.

There are at least 20 hydrocarbons in wine whose role in determining quality nobody really understands. Acetaldehyde at high levels is one of the odours responsible for sherry, yet at lower concentrations masquerades as oxidised table wine.

Vanillin, derived from oak lignin shows higher concentrations in American than European oak and is easily detected in those blockbuster 100% American oak matured reds. Diacetyl, a by-product of malolactic fermentation, imparts a buttery character to chardonnay.

The myriad aroma and flavour compounds and their combination and concentration are ultimately a function of grape variety, climate, soil, viticulture and winemaking.

Wine is ephemeral, an aesthetic, a feast upon all the senses.

It does not just involve sight, smell, taste and touch – it involves pleasure, memory and friendship. Our language cannot supply us with enough words to describe the complexity of wine. In fact, great wine defies analysis. And this is where I turn to art.

A kinship exists between wine and art. Music involves the combination of sounds, painting combines colours and texture. Both allow for critical analysis, yet on a deeper level provoke an emotional response.

I once found myself trying to describe Mudgee shiraz to friends not into wine. I began with the standard spiel – red berry fruit, liquorice, spice, pepper, chocolate...tannins that tend



Egon Schiele's *Embrace* evokes a muscled Mudgee shiraz.

to be large, grainy, bold and abundant creating wines which are more muscley than voluptuous...

Suddenly I found it much easier to think in terms of paintings.

Imagine a powerful South Australian shiraz embodied by the decadence of Rubens's *The Feast of Venus*, a Mudgee shiraz by the sinewy *Embrace* of Egon Schiele?

The elegance of Victorian cabernet is Vermeer, Bordeaux's strength can be seen in Rodin's sculpture and Margaret River cabernet is Caravaggio's exquisite *Youthful Bacchus*.

‘Wine is ephemeral,
an aesthetic,
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At the opposite end of the spectrum Victoria's Great Western sparkling burgundy could only be Australia's Norman Lindsay and an unctuous Rutherglen tokay expressed with a warm bucolic Bruegel.

The delicate fragrance of a ten-year-old German riesling is reminiscent of Botticelli's *La Primavera* whilst the celebratory Champagne, a deceptively playful drink, can lead you down the path to a Toulouse-Lautrec.

A bold *Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc* screams the bracing and arresting Kandinsky.

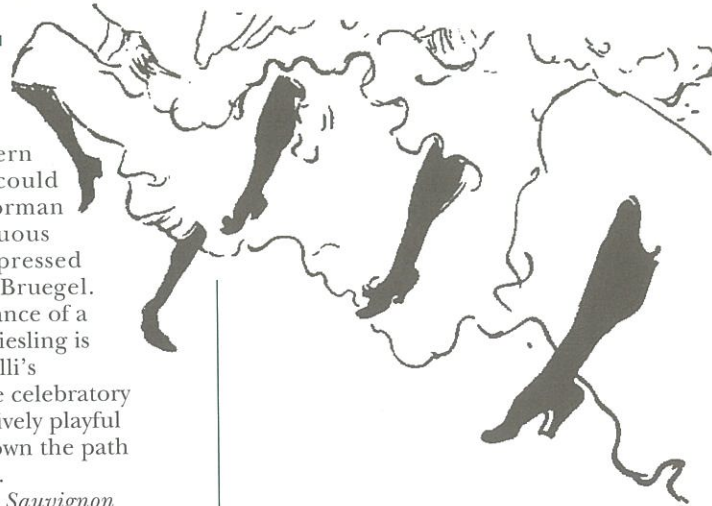
Conversely, a shy Hunter semillon is captured in the gentle subtlety of Aborigine Emily Kngwarreye's dot painting *Kame*.

Some may consider it sacrilegious to link Yquem with the British artist Turner, yet his sunsets personify the golden depth and lightness that is Yquem. Our Australian counterpart, De Bortoli's Noble One, is more akin to Brett Whiteley's *Big Orange*.

The possibilities are endlessly entertaining – and challenging. A sublime white burgundy reflects the enigmatic *Summer's Night* by Winslow Homer in which two women dance before the nocturnal infinity of a moonlit sea.

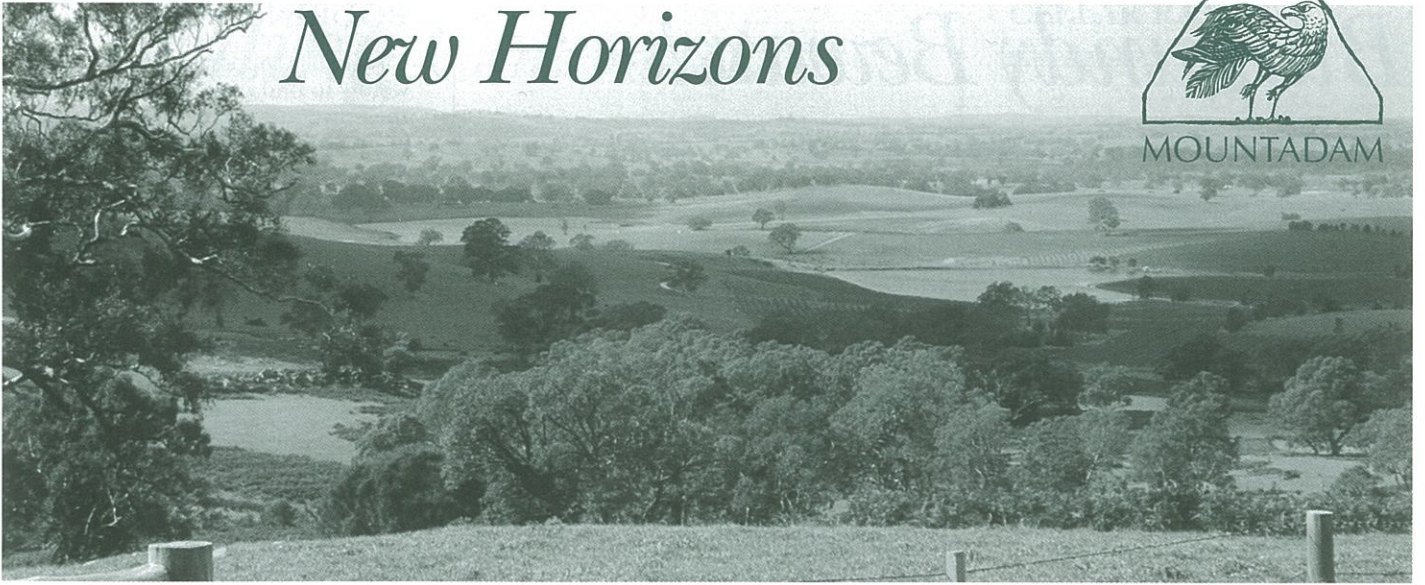
But how does one describe a grand old red burgundy? I find it impossible – too elusive, too mysterious, something unattainable in words or paint or music, only to be experienced by mind, body and soul.

Susie Roberts is the winemaker at Huntington Estate in Mudgee, New South Wales and loves to paint.



Toulouse-Lautrec knew that champagne can set your toes tapping.

New Horizons



The High Eden Ridge, home of Mountadam.

Late last year Cape Mentelle announced its acquisition of Mountadam Vineyards in the Eden Valley of South Australia.

During the Olympic Games when the prowess of Australia's athletes preoccupied the nation, Cape Mentelle quietly went shopping.

Not for cuddly wombats, high-performance running shoes or boxing kangaroo flags but for one of Australia's most highly regarded independent family wine companies – Mountadam, owned and operated for two generations by the Wynn family.

The purchase represents an opportunity to achieve growth through expansion into other premium wine-producing regions, a logical move given the company's first sortie into Marlborough in 1985.

'Mountadam is a winery with its roots in the soil, a heritage brand from a fine wine producing region, which ideally complements our existing operations,' commented Chief Executive David Hohnen when announcing the acquisition.

Mountadam's history stretches back in time to Europe, where the Polish Weintraub family (later named Wynn) first produced wine. It was a rustic brew made from reconstituted raisins, a far cry from its 21st century legacy, a portfolio of brands which encompasses the renowned Mountadam Chardonnay, David Wynn Patriarch Shiraz and the Eden Ridge brand.

David Wynn, who died in 1995, is remembered as one of the visionaries of the Australian wine industry. It was he who trialled the first drip irrigation system, who established vineyards in the Riverina in the 1950s, encouraged development of the Mornington Peninsula, and had a creative hand in the design of the humble glass flagon.

Wynn senior also saw the true potential of Coonawarra's terra rossa, paying top dollar (£22,000) in 1951 for the original Riddoch winery and vineyards which he renamed Wynns Coonawarra Estate.

However, some might argue that his greatest bequest was the 'bag in a box' wine cask – a plastic bag which changed the drinking habits of a nation.

Son, heir and now Executive Chairman, Adam Wynn, is delighted at this latest phase in Mountadam's history.

'Mountadam is a winery with its roots in the soil, a heritage brand from a fine wine region...'

DAVID HOHNEN

'I've always had great admiration for the Cape Mentelle approach and look forward to being part of their team. Mountadam has reached a stage where we needed investment funds to go the next step. This allows us to develop a sustained planting program and expand our marketing and distribution, particularly overseas.'

Bordeaux trained, Adam Wynn has been Mountadam's chief winemaker since 1984. His two fundamental beliefs have been integral to the success of the company: wine must be a reflection of the vineyard from which it comes, and secondly, oenology is a gentle, thorough and painstaking craft. This philosophy has been assiduously applied to Mountadam's range of distinctive, complex wines, led by the flagship chardonnay.

Planted in 1972, the mature Mountadam estate has 50 hectares under vine, producing about 45,000 cases. Under the new ownership focus will be placed on optimal fruit quality and its pivotal role in creating wines that have a distinctive varietal and regional character, a philosophy which has been a Cape Mentelle and Cloudy Bay cornerstone.

Mountadam wines continue to be available from their existing distributor.



Muck and mysticism spreads across Marlborough.

MAGIC MULCH

If you spot small brown mounds dotted about the Wairau Valley don't immediately think the valley is under attack by super moles. No indeed. These brown piles are all part of HortResearch's mighty mulch program.

The innovative idea, sponsored by several Marlborough wine companies including Cloudy Bay, aims to develop sustainable systems for waste recycling. Trials are underway to mix vineyard and winery waste plus forestry, fish and green farm wastes to create a mulch product that is spread under the vines.

'The mulching program has immeasurable economic and environmental benefits for the New Zealand wine industry,' claims Cloudy Bay viticulturist, Ivan Sutherland.

Of particular significance is enhanced soil health, weed and disease suppression and improved soil moisture retention. The early results of the three-year project are encouraging.

'Sustainable agriculture through the use of mulches will greatly assist in providing substance to the internationally promoted wine industry logo - 'the riches of a clean, green land.'

Burgundy Beware!



The Pinot Panel.

Pinot Noir 2001 sends a message...

Any rugby fan knows how daunting the All Blacks can be when they take to the field. Opponents wilt. Which is possibly how any Burgundians attending Pinot Noir 2001 felt after the three-day onslaught by New Zealand's pinot noir producers.

Unashamedly nationalistic and partisan, Pinot Noir 2001 set a very upbeat tone: New Zealand has the ideal environment, proven ability and utmost commitment to becoming a major force in world-class pinot noir.

Never before has a wine event attracted such high calibre, acute palates – over 460 of them which sipped, slurped and savoured the words and wines of over sixty producers and presenters.

Not surprisingly, over half were local fans there to cheer the home team. But they had some help from the Aussies (21% of delegates), and the Yanks (16%), plus supporters from Europe and Asia.

They learnt that the first pinot vines were planted in Masterton near Wellington in 1897; that the

first serious pinot is credited to Nobilos (1976); that the first clones were AM 10/5 and 2/10 but now Dijon clones 113-115, 667 and 777 are the most desirable.

Other lessons included the fact that there are 1098 hectares planted, 11% of the country's total vineyard area; that there is an expected 85% increase by 2003,

bringing total plantings up to 2036 hectares, second to sauvignon blanc.

What's more, the 2000 vintage produced 6319 tonnes of wonderful garnet juice, most of which is drunk on home ground, only 2% being exported.

The international 'coaches', wine celebrities including Jancis Robinson and the *Wine Spectator's* Harvey Steiman, also broadened their knowledge of the Kiwi pinot strategy and style.

Robinson confessed she'd never realised how important pinot noir was to New Zealanders, and Steiman discovered that it 'possessed all the elements necessary for great Pinot Noir'.

And if they had any doubt about the reason for this success and the training regime, Chairman of the event Richard Riddiford, dispelled any illusions. 'If the New Zealand wine industry can repeat in the next ten years what we have done in the last ten, Burgundy better look out!

There's nothing like laying down the gauntlet to a Frenchman to get a winemaker's adrenalin pumping. But is it a desirable aperitif before a workout with duck confit and a velvety rich, big beguiling glass of pinot noir?

WIDOW'S SUCCESSOR

It's a long time since a woman was at the helm of Veuve Clicquot. But Cécile Bonnefond, recently appointed President of the international Veuve Clicquot Group, isn't daunted. She comes to the post from the world of food marketing – her most recent position as CEO of Sara Lee's French and Italian bakery division.

Prior to that she spent 10 years with Kellogg's and sees similarities between cereal and wine. Certainly converting European baguette eaters to breakfast cereal can't possibly be as challenging as convincing them to drink more good New World wines!

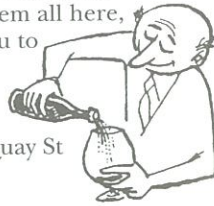
The VCP Group under Cécile Bonnefond's command includes champagnes Veuve Clicquot, Krug and Canard Duchêne, and several premium wine brands, among them California's Pacific Echo and Newton, and of course, Cape Mentelle, Cloudy Bay and the recently acquired Mountadam brand.



Cécile chose to visit the New World subsidiaries in her first month with the company and was particularly excited by the various sustainable viticulture programs, initiatives she feels will provide the New World market prominence in years to come.

POURING NOW@

Cloudy Bay supporters often call the winery to find convenient stockists of their favourite tippie. Cloudy Bay wines are supplied to selected restaurants throughout New Zealand and while it is not possible to list them all here, we'd like to introduce you to some favourite stockists.



Auckland

- Cin Cin on Quay, 99 Quay St
PH (09) 307 6966
- Kermadec Ocean Fresh Restaurant,
1st Floor, Viaduct Quay
PH (09) 309 0412
- Anglesea Grill, 147 Ponsonby Road,
Ponsonby PH (09) 360 4551

Wellington

- Two Rooms, 382 Broadway Ave,
Miramar PH (04)388 8428
- Francois, 10a Murphy St, Thorndon
PH (04) 499 5252
- Copita Eatery & Winebar,
146 Featherston St PH (04) 473 6001
- The White House, 232 Oriental Pde,
Oriental Bay PH (04) 385 8555
- One Red Dog Restaurant, 9-11 Blair St
PH (04) 384 9777

South Island

- Hotel d'Urville, 52 Queen St,
Blenheim PH (03) 577 9945
- Bacchus Wine Bar, First Floor,
12 The Octagon, Dunedin
PH (03) 474 0824
- McNeills Cottage Brewery,
14 Church St, Queenstown
PH (03) 442 9688
- Tatler Restaurant, 5 The Mall,
Queenstown PH (03) 442 8372
- Cafe Neve, Main Road, Fox Glacier
PH (03) 751 0110

MUSTS

Pinot @ Cloudy Bay

Saturday 23 June, 2001

Details & Registration: Anna Griffiths

PH (03) 520 9142

email:anna.griffiths@cloudybay.co.nz

Spring Sauvignon Blanc Celebration

1-2 September, 2001

Enquiries: Wine Marlborough

PH (03) 577 9299

email:admin@wine-marlborough.co.nz

Negociants NZ Winemakers Tour

24-28 September, 2001

Details: Caroline Henty

PH (09) 366 1140

email:chenly@negociants.com

Counting Coconuts

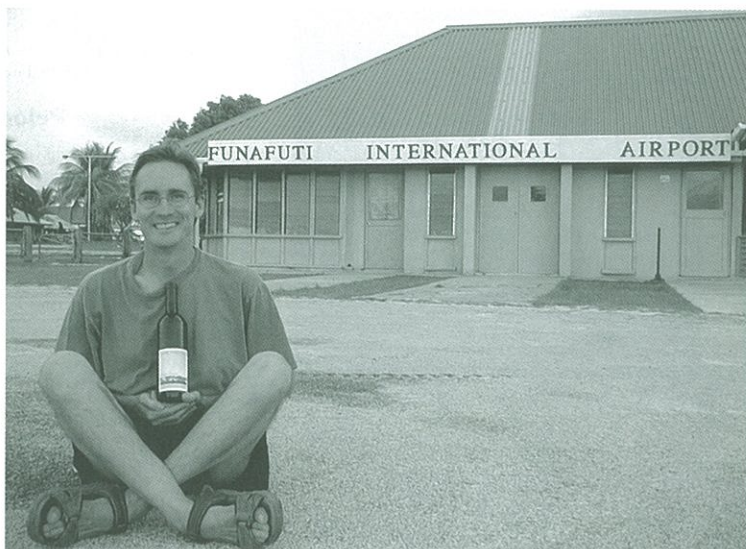
Cape Mentelle's chief grape counter, Ian Mayo, last year swapped driving a computer for a Landrover. He took twelve months leave and, together with his wife Annie, set off adventuring.

For once in his life there were to be no plans, no schedules and no budgets, instead he was going walkabout in Western Australia. So vague was the itinerary that the Mayos ended up spending three months in Tuvalu, the second smallest nation in the world which lies in the Pacific 1000 km north of Fiji.

'We'd applied to AESOP who send volunteers to help small businesses in the South Pacific,' explains Ian, who unexpectedly found himself 'employed' at the Tuvaluan Copra Co-operative.

Within days, Ian settled down island-style to bring seven years of incomplete accounts up to date. The chief Grape Counter had graduated to coconuts.

Ian unreservedly recommends AESOP to anyone interested in



Ian Mayo practising to be a Mentelle Ambassador.

voluntary work. Short-term unpaid contracts are offered from bricklaying to banking, and expenses are met by either AESOP or the recipient business.

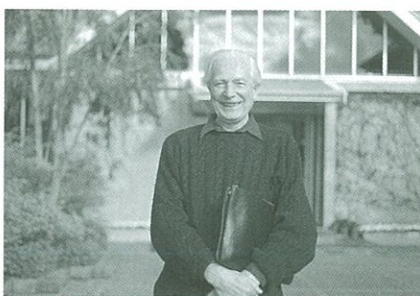
Ian is now back counting grapes. Nothing much has changed, but his shirts are a bit more colourful!

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BROADSIDE

Cloudy Bay frequently welcomes visitors from all over the world, wine lovers who often take major detours to see first-hand the splendours of the Wairau Valley. One recent traveller was Michael Broadbent, regular columnist with *Decanter* and previous head of Christie's wine division, who came primarily to taste a line-up of sauvignon blancs before heading over to Oz for Len Evans' 70th birthday party.

Mr Broadbent was captivated by the beauty of the valley, and it seems Kevin Judd's photography. 'What struck me were the vivid hues, then Kevin's eye for texture and form, his positive genius for contrasting tones,' he writes in a recent *Decanter*. And Judd's book? It's 'a work of art, a book to wallow in, preferably with a glass of sauvignon blanc.' Absolutely!



Michael Broadbent sets off to be captivated...

CELLAR RAT

Dearest Mentelles.

Giddy. Well it had to happen, the Rat's worst nightmare... Well maybe not his worst nightmare (that involves drowning in pinot noir), but being selected for the CBV wine options team.

Well, not actually in the team but as first reserve. If anyone pops their palate, toasts their taste buds or blows their nose, the Rat is called into action.

So picture the Rat, on the bench, palate cleanser in hand, surrounded by winemakers, wine writers, MWs, wine enthusiasts and the inevitable wine bores, whiskers twitching. Deciding another palate cleanser was in order, the Rat cracked a second Coopers hoping no-one would be injured.

Then again I'd done all the training – the staff tastings, the late nights when James was in one of his 'have I got a wine for you' moods, the endless summer BBQs with the inevitable one-upmanship. Not to mention the thousands of cooking wines that opened up beautifully in the kitchen and had me seriously doubting my cooking wine selection skills.

Another palate cleanser.

Then it happened. Kev looked at me and said 'the light's far too good to miss a shot of Mount Riley. You're up Rat', and left the room. Composure was the key. So I downed the last helpful drop. As I strode to the team table I became aware of the 7.1% alc/vol statement nestled in the corner of the label. The team looked at me with bewilderment as I blurted out 'Girray, I'r here'.

Ever been to a party, arriving late and straight when the place is raging, and no matter how hard you try everyone's having more fun than you? Well, the Rat was the party who'd just arrived – and it turned out to be a temperance meeting. Merde!

I got through the first flights with a nod of the head and a few well chosen 'mmms.' But then it happened.

Yep, I know this wine. I'm sure I know this wine, IT'S ONE OF OURS. 'No it's not', said the winemaker. 'I think it's French.'

The Rat was taken aback. I should have taken affront and walked away. But primed on palate cleansers, I dug in my slightly wobbly heels and gave the team the eye. 'I think it's ours. In fact it's the 94'.

All eyes descended on the winemaker. It was a standoff. Who was right, the person who actually made the wine or a slightly glazed Rat?

The team of four followed the winemaker into France.

AND THEY WERE WRONG, WRONG, WRONG!!!

Next morning, I was busy cleaning out the winery's effluent system. Up came the winemaker. 'Interesting nose don't you think, Rat? What country do you think that comes from...?'

The story has several lessons. Like the Rat, take courage in your palate and always go with your first impression, unless of course you're worried about being wrong when you're right...

Love, light and peace,

Gerald



The ambassadorial asparagus whitebait basket.

PRETTY PLEASED

Prominent Wellington caterer Ruth Pretty chose West Coast whitebait paired with *Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc 2000* to open a special ambassadorial dinner that showcased New Zealand produce at Veuve Clicquot's Reims mansion, Hôtel du Marc. The six-course degustation menu also featured pink lamb salad, Cervena rack with beetroot puree, and an indulgent honey icecream stack.

Little did she realise that the meal was just the appetiser before she and her husband Paul, were admitted to the exclusive 'Friends of the Widow' group, for services to Champagne and to the one with the orange label in particular. Congratulations!

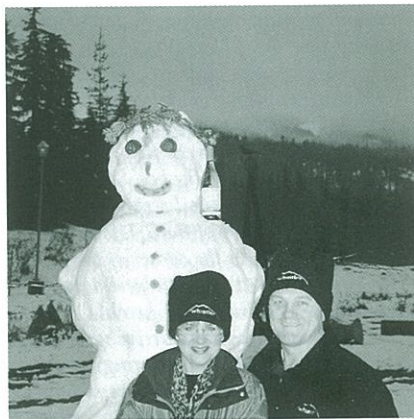
Cold Snaps

It seems Mentelle Ambassadors have a fascination with cold places. Adventurers have travelled to both poles, to glaciers and frozen lakes. They've huddled in remote huts in below-freezing temperatures, skied down powder slopes, dodged icebergs – all in quest of that exalted Ambassador status.

The Ed has tried hard to fathom this fixation. Does it mean MN supporters are a warm-blooded lot, or just that they prefer their Cloudy Bay Chardonnay chilled on demand? Any explanations welcome...

Meanwhile, let's meet the new recruits. Margaret and Jeff Kirk of Manukau City, Auckland, found a friendly snowman to chill their bottle at Chateau Whistler in Canada. (They confess they didn't act with true diplomacy, they drank his share.)

And Ralph Patterson, of Invercargill took the plunge with a



Margaret & Jeff Kirk chill out at Whistler, Canada.



Ralph Patterson clutches his ambassadorial drop.

bottle of Sauvignon Blanc in an Antarctic hot pool at remote Deception Island. He doesn't remember if he was running hot or cold, but he managed to keep the Cloudy Bay out of the water.

If you too wish to be part of CBV's export effort, keep your eyes peeled. Next time you're in some far-flung corner of the globe and spot a bottle of Cloudy Bay (or Cape Mentelle) – in a cigar bar in Cuba, teppanyaki cafe in Tokyo or B&B in Birmingham, buy it and take a photo. Then send it to The Editor, Mentelle Notes. Taking a bottle with you is also highly commended and encouraged. MN will publish the best and most alluring photo and the winning Mentelle Ambassador will receive a FREE mixed case of CBV wine. All entrants receive a CB T-shirt.

STIFFER LIQUOR Every year Australia's liquor industry toasts itself at an annual Awards night. It's a big gig for the beer and spirits arm of the beverage business and everyone ends up a winner. Or almost.

Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc was a finalist in the Imported Wine of the Year category, standing shoulders high with the likes of Bollinger and Mateus Rosé. Big drum rolls, tense moments, anticipation...then crushing disappointment. The winner was... Asti Spumante! A timely reminder that not everyone is addicted to sauvignon blanc.

KIWI SALE

Christie's first-ever auction of New Zealand wines is a mark of the international stature and market penetration of New Zealand's wine producers. Held in London earlier this year, the sale featured lots from Martinborough, Central Otago, Hawkes Bay and, of course, Marlborough.

Bidding was brisk and prices remarkably buoyant, many lots selling significantly above the recommended reserve. *Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc 2000* fetched £310 a case, while a mixed vintage case (1991-2000) drew £250; *Chardonnay 1996* sold for £280 and *Pinot Noir 1997* for £230.

The event establishes an international secondary market for New Zealand wines, a move destined to underpin worldwide recognition of New Zealand's premium wine industry.

SUPER SOMMELIER

Diners at Wellington's Copita restaurant should befriend wine expert and proprietor Stephen Morris – winner of the *Sommelier 2000* competition. The award capped off a good year for Morris who also collected two wine list awards, and Michael Guy's nod for Wellington 'Restaurant of the Year'.

Morris who has a MA in English Literature and did his final thesis on Anglo-Saxon poetry, was previously the manager at the Boulcott Street Bistro. His favourite wine is always the next one. He wouldn't mind if it was a Cloudy Bay (a 'must-list producer') or a Cape Mentelle red because he likes their 'pure fruit expressions of grape and place.' If you order one you might like to part with a glass and see if it inspires Stephen to an impromptu ditty. *Copita, 146 Featherston St, Wellington PH (04) 473 6001.*

Pelorus 1996

'An heroic mouth-filling méthode with an impressive mix of yeast autolysis and intense fruit flavours. Pelorus lovers will certainly not be disappointed with the 1996 vintage.'
89 points, Bob Campbell MW, CUISINE

'When only the best will do and you're feeling patriotic, the obvious choice is Pelorus...'
Charles Gill, DAILY NEWS

'Long seen as the pinnacle of New Zealand bubbly and the new release is no exception.'
Joëlle Thomson, SHE

Pelorus NV

'Perhaps the country's most glamorous méthode. Typically fruit rich and full-flavoured with a complex hard-to-describe medley of fruit and yeast flavours.'
88 points, Bob Campbell MW, CUISINE

'Ripe yet dry, this is a perfect sparkling wine for a meal.'
Spurrier's Choice, DECANter

Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc 2000

'A classic Cloudy Bay, with the power, intensity and touch of complexity so typical of the label. Deliciously vibrant and zesty...'
Michael Cooper, NORTH & SOUTH

'Year after year Cloudy Bay delivers a fine and complex sauvignon blanc. Strong passionfruit with a touch of sweat. Great texture and length.'
92 points, Bob Campbell MW, CUISINE

Cloudy Bay Te Koko 1997

'A distinctive barrel and bottle-aged sauvignon blanc with a 'drop-dead' creamy texture and mellow complexity.'
93 points, Bob Campbell MW, CUISINE

Cloudy Bay Pinot Noir 1999

'The best ever from this big-name Marlborough winery, and certainly that region's most stylish pinot noir.'
Joëlle Thomson, THE PRESS

Cloudy Bay Late Harvest Riesling 1999

'This luscious dessert wine is meticulously made, complex, charming... I can't think of anything more heavenly to sip after dinner on a long summer evening.'
Charmian Smith, OTAGO DAILY TIMES

'Cloudy Bay's best kept secret. Beautifully vibrant riesling flavours flattered with honeyed botrytis.'
94 points, Bob Campbell MW, CUISINE

Cape Mentelle Shiraz 1998

'A very classy nose! Rich concentrated fruit is backed with lovely tobacco and leather overtones. Good fruit structure with tight, well-balanced tannins.'
94 points, WINE (UK)

and...

'If any winemaker deserves a knighthood (or its Kiwi equivalent) it must be David Hohnen... On second thoughts, this man of action and few words would be about as comfortable with a knighthood as he would be wearing a ballerina's tutu.'
Bob Campbell MW,
CUISINE WINE ANNUAL 2001

MENTELLE NOTES

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A View from the Vineyard



A cloud-filled day.

Pic: Kevin Judd

‘Wine is grape juice. Every drop of liquid filling so many bottles has been drawn out of the ground by the roots of a vine. All these different drinks have at one time been sap in a stick.’

HUGH JOHNSON

