

ISSUE #6, APRIL 2023

Capsule

An update from NSW



Proud campaigners for change

We are delighted to extend our commitment to sustainability through Harpers Sustainability Charter involvement and our very first Sustainability Matters webinar.

Since our inception sustainability has been part of our DNA. What started out as a focus on organic wines, has now evolved into making great changes within our business to demonstrate a high social and environmental performance. We have made a legal commitment, changing our corporate governance so that we are accountable to all stakeholders, not just shareholders. We are committed to reducing our impact on the environment. This has culminated in our recent application for B Corp certification, which is currently pending approval.

This year, we are proud to continue to advocate for sustainability within the trade, and this Spring sees us renew our commitment to the Harpers Sustainability Charter, where we are Champion sponsors. The Charter is designed to help galvanise, share and drive best practice throughout the drinks trade.

In March, our founder and MD, Kim Wilson took to the stage, as she joined fellow MDs on Harper's webinar: 'Folding Sustainability into the DNA of the Boardroom.' Here she discussed the many things we have done at North South Wines to embed sustainability through changing governance and more. You can view the webinar on the Harpers website.

In April, we will be holding our first Sustainability Matters webinar, where we will bring together a panel of leading sustainability experts from across the wine trade to discuss how best UK independent retailers can make their businesses more sustainable.

The webinar will be chaired by Tim Carlisle, Head of On Trade and Independents Retail, North South Wines and panellists include Toby Webb: Co-Founder, Executive Director Sustainable Wine Roundtable, Sustainable Wine, Rob Glastonbury: Operations Manager, De Bortoli Winery, Louisa Fitzpatrick: Director, Old Chapel Cellars and Rebecca Murphy: Sustainability Manager, North South Wines.

For details and how to book your place see the Events section on the back page.

New limited production Whenua wines from Tohu

Over the last few years, we have been lucky to get access to very limited parcels of Tohu's Whenua Single Vineyard range. Thankfully this year is no exception.

At Maori-owned Kono, of which Tohu wines is part, their winemaking philosophy is to create wines that capture the flavours of each region's unique environment while upholding respect and protection of the land for future generations. This is never more evident than in the Whenua range. Focussing on Tohu's vineyards in the Upper Awatere, we are pleased to introduce Whenua Awa Chardonnay 2018 and Whenua Awa Pinot Noir 2019, to sit alongside the Whenua Awa Sauvignon Blanc 2021, available in very limited quantities from mid-April.

Whenua Awa, meaning 'river lands', is Tohu's vineyard of Te Taihu, the top of the South Island. Here, these high-altitude vineyards sit on the remote terraces of the Upper Awatere

Valley, right on the fringes of grape growing possibilities. The vineyards are 230m above sea level, where winds are strong, braided rivers powerful and frosts harsh, and vines have to fight to go beneath the loess soil and river stones in search of the mineral-rich papas clay. It is these conditions that give the wines their concentration and complexity. The sites are farmed organically and are in the process of being organically certified. Wines are fermented either solely or partially with wild yeasts and bottled later to give more texture. These are wines designed to age and make for a wonderful compliment to food.

Speak to your account manager to find out more.



Our top tipples for summer and celebrations

In anticipation of warmer weather and public holidays on the horizon, we've picked out some of our favourite rosé and sparkling wines to have at the ready.



We start in Vinho Verde country, where **Quinta da Calçada** are producing a great value rosé that's easy on both eye and palate. **Coral Ethical Rosé** ticks many boxes – organic, carbon neutral winery, and every bottle sold helps support marine conservation. **Born Rosé** has made a splash with its range of organic Garnacha-based wines and classy Barcelona-inspired branding. Their expressive barrel-aged 503 rosé really breaks the mould (Rated on Page 4 - Cover Crop).

Mirabeau set the benchmark for lifestyle brands with their stunning array of rosés that truly capture the magic of Provence. Their popularity shows no signs of abating.

Has there ever been a better time for drinking traditional method sparkling? **Laborie's Cap Classique Brut Rosé** offers incredible quality and value, this Pinot-dominant blend spending 18 months on lees. Cava is enjoying a renaissance and **Vallformosa's** award-

winning wines don't just have striking labels, they're beautifully balanced and persistent with delicate floral aromatics. It's hard to pick a favourite from **Mandois'** range of Champagnes. Arm twisted, the **2017 Blanc de Blancs**, sourced from Premier Cru sites, is elegance personified. Party-bound? Grab **Villa Sandi's Millesimato Rosé** or **Fresita's strawberry sensation** – either will stop people in their tracks.

Organic for the long term

The cost-of-living crisis has meant that sales of organic have steadied versus previous years. According to the Soil Association Organic Market Report in 2023 sales are up 1.6% to £3.1bn. Nonetheless the total organic food and drink market was still up 25.4% compared to before the pandemic (2019).

Now more than ever before it is accepted that our food and farming systems need fundamental and urgent change. Globally, they are responsible for nearly 1/3 of carbon emissions and habitat destruction. People increasingly recognise how crucial organic farming and food is to humankind's survival.

We're proud to have championed organic since the start of NSW. We have a range of wallet friendly organic wines

from across the globe and are pleased to introduce a new wine from Doña Paula, which combines organic certification with the nation's favourite red varietal. What's not to love?

Unique Organic Malbec 2021

Fruit takes the centre stage in this brand-new Organic Malbec produced by sustainable winery Doña Paula. The hand harvested grapes have been fermented using native yeasts. The wine has been aged in concrete vessels for 10 months without any oak influence and the result is a vibrant, medium bodied Malbec bursting with fruit and fragrant peppermint and wild herbs aromas.





we are nine

With our 9th birthday fast approaching, we sat down with our Founder and Managing Director Kim Wilson to look back at the last 9 years.

What has been the biggest learning curve as a business owner?

Never give up! If you have a dream, follow it. You may be diverted on the way but with grit and determination you will get there.

It took me a long time to realise that I didn't need to do it all myself. Someone once told me success as an MD was achieved by having better people than you around you.

What was your biggest misconception starting out?

The biggest one is thinking that you can do everything yourself. I basically gave up my life for the company for 6 years and it was only when Covid hit that I realised I was going to destroy myself and the company if I kept doing this!

What have been the biggest challenges?

Firstly, cash flow! You live, breathe and sleep this to start with. You must think smart, not be frightened to talk to the bank manager, and have tight controls on the financials.

Secondly, at the start of 2020, as Covid came to the fore, my business partner Joy left the business. At this time, we were in the final stages of Reh Kendermann buying in and in the middle of the unknowns of Brexit! I was spinning out! However, this really was the acceleration phase for NSW. I put a new management team together who luckily gelled together quickly. Three years later we have come out the other side (a bit bruised) but we are better and wiser for it.

What does the next year have in store for North South Wines?

2022 has been tough and we need to rebuild.

From a portfolio side of things, there will be some new additions to come; Bordeaux is on the list following the link-up with Champagne Mandois last year. Greece, too, and some other top-secret projects - watch this space!

We're being audited for BCorp as we speak. Fingers crossed.

60 seconds with Patrick Rohde from Aitken Wines

Aitken's is Dundee's longest established independent wine merchant, dating back to 1874.

On the brink of closure in 2007, Patrick invested and took the reins. Aitken's is now thriving, adding city centre wine bar The Wine Press in 2015. They will celebrate their 150th birthday next year.

How long have you been working with NSW? Since 2020.

What do you like about working with NSW? The ease of service and emphasis on sustainability.

Favourite range from the portfolio? The Cortese and Calçada wines are very popular. We love the quality and backstory of Kono Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc – it's our best-seller at the Wine Press!

How was your recent incentive trip to Quinta da Calçada? Very special. Following a long delay thanks to a very inconvenient global pandemic, it was a great reminder of how great their wines are.

What did you learn about the region? Best known for lighter, aperitif style whites, we got to discover lovely, structured, textural whites, such as Terroir Alvarinho.

Which wines stood out on the trip? I still love the Vinho Verde Reserva, but my standout was the Collection Imperial Bruto, their rich and complex premium Spumante. We convinced Greig to bring a small parcel over for us.





Cover Crop

17



The latest best of the press

Tamlyn Currin's table must have been a pretty picture as she prepared an article on Winter rosés for JancisRobinson.com. We were delighted to see two of our wines included. Of the organic, barrel-aged **Born 503**, Tamlyn wrote, "plump with nectarine and ripe apricot fruit while the bracing cut of blood-orange is vivacious and quenching." **Mandois' Rosé Grande Réserve Champagne** offered a "commotion of pink grapefruit and raspberries and crunchy apple fruit, and a fine tulle of bubbles that fits the succulent fruit like a glove." Tamlyn was equally taken with the other Champagnes from Mandois. From the "apple blossom and glistening dark cherries" of the **Brut Origine NV** to the "fresh popcorn, sliced pears, and salty depth" of the **Blanc de Blancs 2017** and the "deep, hazelnut creamy" character of **Cuvée Victor 2012**, Tamlyn remarked how distinctive and gastronomic these wines are.



Jamie Goode mulled over the change in fortunes for German wine over the past 20 years in his Express column. He picked the **Weinhaus Kalkstein Sauvignon Blanc** from Pfalz to help illustrate the point, praising its explosive fruitiness with "bright green apple, lime and chalky grapefruit notes."



In **Decanter's** recent South African Chenin panel tasting, Painted Wolf Wines performed extremely well with 3 highly recommended wines, with **The Den Chenin Blanc 2022**, easily one of the best value wines in the tasting, offering "perfumed green apple, honeysuckle and rock candy" and "a smoothly sophisticated finish".

Glorioso Reserva 2017 from Bodegas Palacio also featured in Decanter with Fiona Beckett suggesting this 'sumptuously fruity Rioja' would match beautifully with mushroom tapas.



What.ten.words

Ten great wines for independents in just ten words.

- 1 Regional Reserve Chardonnay.** Archetypal, modern Aussie Chardonnay. Much classier than most folk remember.
- 2 Metz Road Pinot Noir** Not trying to be Burgundy, big boned but elegant Pinot.
- 3 Paxton AAA Shiraz** Refined McLaren Shiraz Grenache, meaty, herby black fruit. Cow Horn.
- 4 Painted Wolf Lightning Sauvignon** Vibrant, crystalline dry Bordeaux style Sauvignon fermented in concrete egg.
- 5 Mirabeau Pure** Recently established Provencal gem. Now best selling in the UK.
- 6 Portal da Calçada Espumante Vinho Verde** Crowd-pleasing Portuguese sparkler from Vinho Verde's oldest vineyards. Prosecco alternative.
- 7 Tohu Chardonnay** Lees replaces oak for this kiwi gem. Balanced poise, elegant fruit.
- 8 Wildsong Pinot Gris** Textured, wild ferment, old oak and organic. Lush Pinot Gris.
- 9 Weinhaus Kalkstein Riesling** Limestone based goodness from the vineyards of Pfalz. Mineral zippiness.
- 10 Santa Tresa Spumante Grillo** Spumante, a new take. A tasty regional expression. Simply ace.



Events

Tuesday 25th April, 11am Sustainability Matters Webinar From Grape to Glass:

The key sustainability issues for UK independent retail

We are bringing together a panel of sustainability experts from across the wine trade to explore how independent retailers can make their businesses more sustainable. This will be an informative, interactive session with actionable ideas and is open to all. To attend email: Felicity@northsouthwines.co.uk

