

# Autumn 2009 Newsletter

**2009 Vintage Report – A Bit of a Curates Egg**

**2008 "The Point" - En Primeur offer**

**“Thank You!”**

**Acclaim for our Wines**

**Acclaim for our Restaurant**

**It's that time again!** The grapes are in and pressed-off, the restaurant is on shorter hours, and the Autumn Newsletter is first on my winter “to do” list. Despite the global gloom we are in very good spirits here at Te Whau after another encouraging year. **Now read on...**

## 2009 Vintage Report

Flowering and fruit-set went very well in Spring, and the 2009 growing season was **humming along on all four cylinders**, very nicely, thank you, until that unseasonal **cold Antarctic blast in late February** confused the vines somewhat – sensitive wee things that they are! This particularly affected the early-ripening varieties. Our **Chardonnay** is a reduced crop this year – three barrels only, and I'm afraid there is no En Primeur offer, sorry. However, lovely wild-yeast ferments and very good aromatics. It will be available through the restaurant and cellar door once it is bottled next year.

Next to come in was the **Merlot** – again a tad affected by the cold snap and not perhaps as focused in flavour as usual. As a result Winemaker Herb Friedli “bled” some juice from the tank, pre-ferment, to concentrate the must. **The bonus**, of course, is that we will have some **Rosé of Merlot** again next summer in the restaurant.

Happily Summer returned with a vengeance in March through to the end of harvest, and both the **Cabernet Sauvignon** and **Cabernet Franc** fruit came in to the winery in beautiful condition, with lovely ripe, concentrated flavours. As Herb remarked: “Definitely a Cabernets year”.

**Our tiny oyster-shell mulched Syrah block** also performed very well in the concentrated-flavour department, but it was a small crop - one barrel only – which will go through the restaurant when it is ready in late 2010. Our first release sold out in two weeks!

**I am proud** to say that our **vineyard and winemaking team** have remained **unchanged** for a number of years now, consequently **building a depth of knowledge** as to the specifics and quirks of our sites and the fruit they deliver. The team all work together on the slope and in the winery as a very cohesive and happy group, which I think is **a significant key to the quality** of the wines we produce. **Our sincere thanks to them all.**

**Thank You!**

**A big “thank-you-for-your-patience”** to all our newsletter customers who ordered the special pack of 2008 Chardonnay and 2007 Syrah and Point last year. In the past we have had the

Chardonnay “through” by December for release, but this proved wildly optimistic last season, and Herb, fussy bugger, did not want to push it. **Sorry it’s late!** The good news is that it is scheduled for bottling and release in the next few weeks, and, yes, **it is a stunning wine, well worth the wait.**

## **“En Primeur” Offer**

Each autumn we offer **exclusively to our newsletter customers** the opportunity to purchase the next release of our wines at a **significant discount on a forward-payment basis.** This helps our cash flow during the quieter winter months and allows you to top-up your cellar at good prices! **The offer is time limited and orders must be in by the end of June 2009.**

## **2008 "The Point" En Primeur offer**

As reported here last year, the **2008 vintage** on Waiheke Island was a **“dream growing season”.** The wines have now been in barrel for a year, and have been “tasted and tested” by both ourselves and a number of prominent winemakers and wine writers that have called in recently.

The wines are exceeding our original expectations, with a concentration and balance that is remarkable, and significant ageing potential. Without doubt the **2008 “The Point” is the most profound red wine that we have produced at Te Whau to date.**

The 2008 was a good-sized crop, and this allows us to offer our newsletter customers an En Primeur price, unchanged, of \$42.50 a bottle. It will be released to the market in December 2009/January 2010 at \$70.00 a bottle.

**To secure an allocation of this magnificent wine** please fill out and return the attached order form. We will also be bottling Magnums and Double-magnums on a bespoke basis – see the order form.

We also have some stock of the **2007 “The Point”**, which in my view **eclipses the highly-rated 2005 vintage for power and balance.** It is starting to drink beautifully. If you would like to top-up your cellar with some '07, fill out the appropriate section of the order form. We are offering a 10% rebate on 12-bottle cases for **newsletter customers only.**

## **Acclaim for our Wine**

Englishman **Hugh Johnson, OBE**, probably the world’s greatest wine writer, promised, during his visit to Te Whau a couple of years ago to **“hurry home and update”.** And he did!

In the latest (2009) edition of his long-running **“Pocket Wine Book”**, reviewing over 6,000 wines globally, he names **Te Whau as amongst his “200 favourites worldwide”!** We are one of only a handful of New Zealand wineries so identified, alongside such illustrious names as Felton Road, Te Mata, Craggy Range and Ata Rangi. **Great company!** We also get a mention in the seminal **“World Atlas of Wine** (sixth edition), co-authored with **Jancis Robinson MW**, as in **“Te Whau [is a] winery to watch”.** Nice updating!

Another Englishman, **James Lawther MW**, writing in the **March 2009** edition of **Decanter Magazine**, reviewed New Zealand Syrah and Cabernet/Merlot blends, and named Te Whau “The Point” as amongst **“the best of the claret-style reds”**.

On the local scene **Michael Cooper OM**, New Zealand’s most renowned and rigorous reviewer, singled out our **2007 Rosé of Merlot** as **“one of the most memorable ever made in New Zealand”** in his 2009 Buyers Guide. Praise indeed!

## **Acclaim for our Restaurant**

For the second year in a row our vineyard restaurant has been named **“Winner – Best Rural Restaurant”** in the prestigious **Metro/AUDI Restaurant of the Year Awards**. To achieve such recognition not once, but twice is a real tribute to Head Chef Marco Edwardes and the entire, hardworking team at our Vineyard Café. **Consistency is the hallmark of a good restaurant.**

We also won a **Fodor’sChoice** award for the **third year in a row**, and were the **headline restaurant of choice** when the other big US travel company, **Frommer’s**, named Waiheke Island one of the **“Top Ten Destinations in the World”**. Move over, El Bulli, we’re on your tail!

The restaurant is on winter hours now – Lunch on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and Dinner on Saturday evening. We hope to see you sometime.

Look out for the **Metro Magazine “Let’s Do Lunch”** Mid –winter promotion at Te Whau in the month of June:

“Venison & pancetta involtini, a glass of 2006 “The Point”, coffee & Guylian chocolates - \$45”

Tempted?

Cheers!

**Tony and Moira Forsyth**

Sunday, 17 May 2009