

Media Release

6 September 2006

The 3rd New Zealand Syrah Workshop will be held at Bayview Chateau Tongariro 14 – 16 February 2007.

Over 50 of New Zealand's top Syrah producers will come together to blind taste and critique each others wines from the 2006 vintage.

Syrah production is steadily increasing in New Zealand, particularly in warmer regions from Hawke's Bay northwards. This variety came into its own at the 2005/2006 wine awards, where it became established as a rising star along with Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Noir. More importantly, top wine writers such as Robert Parker and the London Times wine correspondent have already acknowledged the quality of New Zealand Syrah.

To attend, Winemakers and growers have to submit their current in-barrel (2006 vintage) Syrah for blind tasting and critical review by their peers. When the wine is revealed the winemaker has the opportunity to reply to the review and seek guidance from his or her peers on their viticulture practices and winemaking techniques.

The purpose of the workshop is to educate, and improve the standard of Syrah produced in New Zealand.

François Perrin of Château de Beaucastel, widely recognised as one of Chateauneuf-du-pape's finest *domaines*, has confirmed he is available to be the international speaker at the workshop. Francois is also a partner in Tablas Creek, California, and is actively involved in winemaking and viticulture.

There is a refreshing diversity of Syrah styles in New Zealand. Not surprisingly, our Syrah style does not closely resemble any other major producing country. However, the New Zealand Syrah appears to be consistent and unique in the pure expression of varietal character.

The coming together of winegrowers under a banner of education and improvement can only benefit the New Zealand wine consumer. This special feature of this workshop was highlighted by last year's international speaker, Chris Ringland from Adelaide Hills, who said "Nowhere in the world have I seen winemakers come together in such a spirit of co-operation. This just wouldn't happen in Australia or France, and I'm sure it's one of the reasons why New Zealand wine is continuing to improve at the rate it does."

The Workshop is proving a resounding success and winemakers are looking forward to the next Workshop 14–16 February 2007.

Lovers of Syrah take note - a distinct New Zealand style has been established. There are some special New Zealand Syrah wines emerging into the market.

Ends

For further information:

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