

An update from the Wilkinson's at Misha's Vineyard Central Otago, New Zealand - May 2010!

(Sent as an email update 30th May 2010)

Hi all,

How time flies. Our last Misha's Vineyard update was at the beginning of last October – a month before we launched commercial volumes of wines on the market. It's hard to believe how much has happened since then, so I'll try to give you just the highlights!

As with all of our updates, you can skip all the blurb and just look at the pictures at the bottom!

Harvest 2010

We have just finished our 4th vintage (*that's if you include our tiny 'trial vintage' of Pinot Noir in 2007*). This year was a slightly cooler season early on but then made up for it in the second half with lovely warm and dry weather. We started picking on the 13th April and finished just over three weeks later on the 5th May – the latest we've ever finished our harvest. We hand-picked nearly 100 tonnes of grapes, similar tonnage to last year, with 60% of that being Pinot Noir, and the rest comprising our range of white varieties. Richard Williams, our vineyard manager, (meet [Rich](#)) who joined us last October, did an amazing job during his first season running Misha's Vineyard and provided some great seasonal updates which we posted to our blog. He even photographed bunches of all our different grape varieties to show the progress of the ripening along the way! Rich's former life as a graphics designer certainly came to the fore. (*If you're interested in seeing how the season went, all our vineyard updates are posted on our blog- click [Misha's Blog](#)*). Olly Masters, our winemaker, thinks 2010 will be fantastic in terms of wine quality as we had small bunches and small berries– that's what all Pinot Noir winemakers are looking for to get excellent fruit intensity and flavours – and he thinks we'll end up with more structural wines with this vintage. So can't wait until we try a 2010 Pinot Noir – but with our winemaking and ageing processes, that's nearly 2 years away from now! (*Some Pics of harvest at end of email plus on our website gallery [2010 Harvest](#)*)

Wines Doing Well

Since our last update we've launched 8 wines on the market. We launched our 2008 Pinot Noirs last November – with an early-drinking style (for selected markets) called *Impromptu*, our regular premium Pinot Noir "*The High Note*" and a Reserve "*Verismo*". We also launched our 2009 whites - "*The Starlet*" Sauvignon Blanc, "*Dress Circle*" Pinot Gris, "*Lyric*" Riesling, "*Limelight*" Riesling and "*The Gallery*" Gewürztraminer. The reviews for our wines have been amazing – way too many to list but we have captured them all on our website! Click on [Misha's Vineyard Press](#) It's such a relief to hear how the wines have been received but all of them have received scores of **90+ points!** That's quite amazing for a young vineyard - but it has a lot to do with the unique site that took so long to discover – along with the hugely talented winemaker we have in Olly. Added to that we have the talents of Sarah-Kate & Dan Dineen along with James McElrea at Maude winery who assist on all the day-to-day work - it's no wonder the wines are garnering such great accolades already. I sometimes hear comments about old vines making great wines, but I think Central Otago has proven they're making world-class wines that are winning the highest global wine accolades – and let's face it everything from Central Otago is made with young vines!

Wines in Australia and Asia – and Beyond

With the launch of wines last November we also announced some distributors for our wines. In New Zealand, we were ecstatic to be taken on by New Zealand's premier distributor, Negociants. It was indeed an honour to be part of that amazing portfolio. We also announced 3 distributors in Asia: Singapore – Rubicon Reserve Wines, Hong Kong – Jebesen Fine Wines, Japan – Apurevu Trading. We are excited about our partners in these Asian markets as they are all top tier distributors and they're great partners to work with as we build our brand. Our wines are primarily targeted at restaurants and hotels and specialised wine retailers. In Singapore we were lucky enough to have our Sauvignon Blanc in a blind tasting at the Singapore Cricket Club (*against NZ's most famous wine brands*) and ours was chosen! And hotels like the Regent Hotel and the Shangri-la Hotel are serving our wines as their ultra premium 'by the glass' wines.

This year we also appointed 2 distributors for Australia (the 2nd one just in the last couple of weeks) so we now have most of Australia covered! Already we're in many of the very top restaurants in Melbourne (thanks to Quality Estate Distributors) and we hope to have the same success in Sydney over the course of this year. We have also just done our first shipment to South Korea! Cassy Farmer, admin & ops manager, joined us at the end of last year and she has been amazing in ensuring we get logistics sorted in shipping wines to these various places and that we comply with quite an onerous process to ensure wines meet all NZ and export certifications. She also runs all of our finance – and anything else that needs doing! (meet [Cassy](#))

The next phase of distribution starts next month when Andy and I head to London followed by the US in July – hopefully we'll have our wines in those markets later in the year. It's a lot of travel currently but at least we're doing it (well most of it) together! Andy's now ten months into his new job at Misha's Vineyard – and doesn't miss the I.T. world a bit. (Although I did hear him tell someone the other day that it's hard adjusting to working for a boss - one who's incredibly demanding! Hhhmmmm - perhaps that's why he volunteered to drive the tractor during harvest ...peace and quiet all day in the cab of the tractor!)

Getting the Word Out

We're avid users of social media – which is just another channel of communication these days and a wonderful way to increase awareness of Misha's Vineyard. We're now in the top 50 wineries on Twitter. We've even been doing quite a few magazine interviews recently on our usage of social media. Also since the last update, I've taken on being the New Zealand correspondent for Wine Business Monthly in Australia and have been writing a feature story every month. (*See our blog to read the stories- click [Misha's Blog](#)*). I love this writing gig which focuses on key business and marketing issues for the New Zealand wine industry and enables me to get a broad industry perspective. And it's a huge thrill to see my stories in print each month! So you should follow us on Twitter or Facebook – or on our blog [Misha's Blog](#)



[Click here](#)



[@MishasVineyard](#)

And please, if you have any great contacts (ie wine distributors, retailers or sommeliers) – let us know. Building a brand is done one contact at a time – so every bit helps!

That's it for now – the rest is best said in pictures!

Misha & Andy

** NOTE – All the shots have been inserted into the email as thumbnails, so they shouldn't appear as email attachments. Apologies if on some email systems this does occur (ie webmail/Mac).*

And if you'd prefer not to get our twice- a-year updates, please just let us know.

Misha's Vineyard - Central Otago, New Zealand Harvest 2010



Morning Break at harvest



Pinot Noir ready for picking



Flora from France



Ernst – Misha's Vineyard staff



Julie & Jo – Harvest team



French travellers in our harvest team



Sue – Misha's Vineyard staff



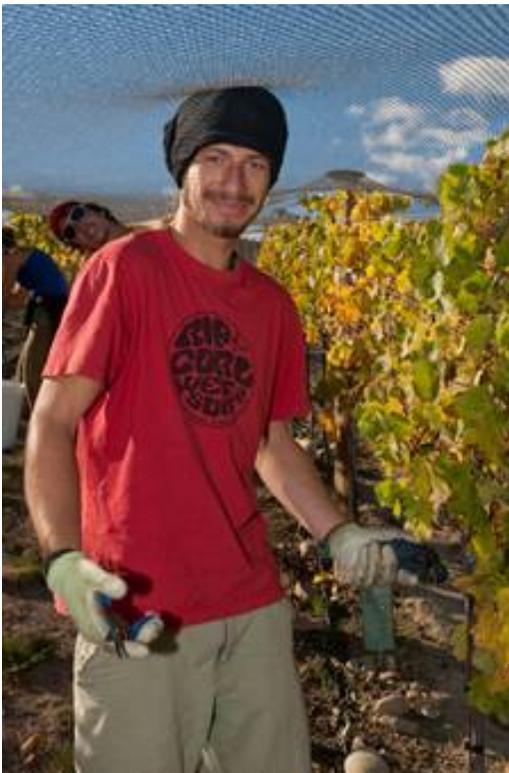
Julie



Flora



Ernst – Misha's Vineyard staff



Three of the French travellers in our harvest team and Ken – from China

Summer on the Vineyard



As the vines turn golden in Autumn



Data recorder in our unplanted block



Looking towards Lake Dunstan



Looking up to "ski slope"



New plantings above Lake Dunstan



We call this area "ski slope"!



The contrast!

Marketing Wine



Andy, Olly and I went to Hong Kong for media events, distributor training, hotel & restaurant visits.



Our media lunch organised by our distributor – Jebesen Fine Wines



Misha & Kevin (Jebesen Fine Wines)



Olly & Misha in Tokyo – Olly did a Masterclass for sommeliers with our distributor, Apurevu Trading

Some media comments of our range of wines

"Misha's Vineyard has just three vintages under its belt but is already proving to be one of Central Otago's great wine producers" **Bob Campbell MW**

"Some wines have an indefinable quality of magic that transcends all empiricism. Those from Misha's Vineyard in the Bendigo sub-region of Central Otago have it." **Raymond Chan, Regional Wines**

"From site selection through viticulture and winemaking, Misha has refused to cut any corners with her project and has stayed true to their "no compromises" philosophy. The first fruits of her labour are indeed impressive" **Lisa Perrotti-Brown MW (Robert Parker)**.

"Well the first thing that they have got right is their wine. They have an excellent winemaker in Olly Masters and have spent much time and money in finding the right piece of land – on the dramatic lakefront terraces of Bendigo Station, a high country sheep station in Central Otago. They have, as you would expect, concentrated on Pinot Noir but also produce Riesling, Pinot Gris, Gewurztraminer and Sauvignon Blanc thereby giving them a good range. The early results are impressive. The wines, for me, were excellent with lovely varietal definition. More importantly they have been well received the media and wine judges alike." **Giles Hine, Tiz Wine**

"This new label from Central Otago is an accomplished range from a switched-on producer. With vineyards in the well regarded sub-region of Bendigo, and a talented crew on board, it will be interesting to see how the label progresses." – **Emma Jenkins IWM**

"Last year I was blown away by the quality of wines from Misha's first release from 2007 and 2008. This year Misha and Andy Wilkinson bought their wines to Auckland for a memorable tasting and lunch at The Grove Restaurant in Auckland....Winemaker Olly Masters has crafted a range of exceptional aromatic wines that display the terroir and climate of this stunning Central Otago site" **Glenda Neil, Vinote**

"..a very impressive range of wines" **Bob Campbell MW**

Regards

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