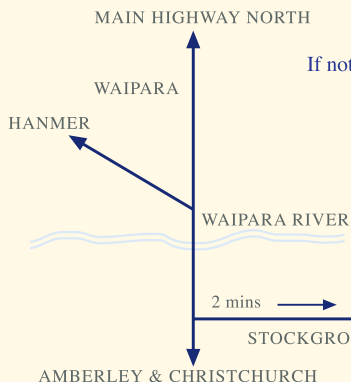




#### SENDER

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**PEGASUS BAY**  
 FINE WAIPARA WINE

JUST 45 MINUTES NORTH OF CHRISTCHURCH

# PEGASUS BAY

FINE WAIPARA WINE



NEWSLETTER - SUMMER 2008/9

## Complimentary Mail Order Tastings



**Auckland, Tuesday 9th December: 5-7pm**

Aqua Marine room 1, First floor, Hilton Hotel,  
 Shed 21, Princes St. wharf, 147, Key st



**Wellington, Wednesday 10th December: 5-7pm**

Shed 5 Restaurant and Bar  
 Queens Wharf, Down Town, Wellington



**Christchurch, Thursday 11th December: 5-7pm**

The Fisher Art Gallery  
 134 Victoria St, next to Vic's Cafe

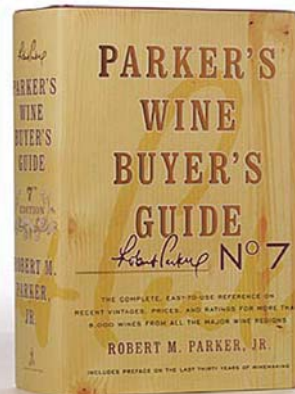
# THE PARKERISATION OF PEGASUS

A week or two back I received a telephone call. "Congratulations!" a voice said. "Thanks", I answered, obviously sounding mystified. "You don't know do you?" the caller added. "No," I replied. "Well, you have just been named as one of New Zealand's 5 outstanding producers in Robert Parker's new wine book."

Robert Parker is regarded as North America's, and arguably the world's, most influential wine person. This lawyer turned wine critic has written many books on wine and even has his own magazine, aptly named The Wine Advocate. In his recently released Parker's Wine Buyer's Guide, New Zealand's wine producers are rated and we felt humbled to find that **Pegasus Bay was one of only 5 to be named as outstanding** and given **5 stars**, the others being Te Mata (Hawkes Bay), Ata Rangi (Martinborough), Felton Road (Central Otago), and Rippon (Central Otago).

He says that rating producers is perhaps the most important point of the book. "The more one tastes and assimilates the knowledge of the World's regions, the more one begins to **isolate a handful of truly world-class growers and producers**" ..... "The producers and growers rated **outstanding** and excellent are as close to a guarantee of high quality as you are likely to find" ..... "Those few growers/producers who have received **five star ratings** are those who make the **world's finest wines** and they have been selected for this rating for two reasons: first, because they make the greatest wine of their particular viticultural region and, second, because they are remarkably consistent and reliable even in mediocre and poor vintages"..... "I suspect few consumers will ever be disappointed with one of their wines".

While we value this type of stunning endorsement, you can make sure we will not let it go to our heads. We will be working hard to build on this and improve our quality even further.



## LIGHTNING BOLT HIT'S PEGASUS BAY RESTAURANT!

They say that lightning never strikes in the same place twice but don't believe it. A year or 2 back the prestigious Cuisine magazine named Pegasus Bay Restaurant as the Best Casual Dining Restaurant in New Zealand. We were thrilled to bits.



Chandelier at Pegasus Bay Restaurant  
- Photo courtesy Dr Lindsay Haas

Since then Cuisine has added another category to its awards, that of Winery Restaurant. Recently were left stunned, electrified and excited when the lightning bolt struck again and they named **Pegasus Bay** as the **Best Winery Restaurant in New Zealand**, saying "The Donaldson family runs a very impressive winery and their restaurant stands out as **one of the best places to eat in Canterbury**. Our **judges raved** about their meals ..... It stood out as winner in a very tough field!. They went on to say "You will find delicious food, a great welcome and some stunning wines. The attention to detail that is obvious in the wine making extends itself to the cuisine..... Oliver Jackson's food is light and tasty, well styled and thought through and attuned to the wine. The staff are skilled, professional, helpful and knowledgeable about the menu and the choice of cellared or young wines..... expect a very special lunch".

We feel additional words by us would be superfluous, except to say a big thank you to all our kitchen, restaurant and tasting room staff who will endeavour to give you a great experience while wining and dining at the Bay. The emphasis is on purity of fresh, local, seasonal produce matched to our wines. It is best to telephone 03 3146869, ext 1, to reserve if you are coming to dine but feel free to pop in to enjoy a tasting or the ambience of our establishment and gardens daily from 10am-5pm.

# RAVING ABOUT RIESLING

Without a doubt riesling is Germany and Alsace's greatest grape and they regard it as the "king" of white wine varieties. Their winemakers call it "noble", a word they do not use for most other varieties.

This is because of the sheer quality of the wines it can produce, the best having a complex richly perfumed bouquet, concentration of fruit flavours and palatal weight, but always retaining lively elegance, with a spine of crisp acidity and a fascinating minerality. Riesling is also capable of making a range of wine styles from steely dry to lusciously sweet, something which no other variety can do with such conviction. Add to this the fact that botrytis can complement and enhance the natural characters of riesling, whereas it ruins most other types of grapes, and you have an exceptional winner. The famous British wine-writer, Hugh Johnson, has said "Riesling alone makes pure white wine and it precisely expresses its origin in a spectrum from flowery and feather-light through intense, dry and mineral laden, to the unctuous and creamy, or to a piercing liquor-liked celestial marmalade".

"If riesling is so good, why has it not been more popular?" I can almost hear you say. Well, riesling used to be highly sought after until about 25 years ago when it quite suddenly became unfashionable. Its international fall from grace coincided with a drop in quality associated with some German producers illegally blending in cheap Italian wine. The variety's name was further sullied by misleading labelling. For example Müller Thurgau was commonly labelled Riesling Sylvanner, although it is a completely separate variety, which has no riesling in its origins. Also, in Australia it was perfectly legal to call a wine riesling when it was made out of something completely different, such as semillon. Thus, riesling became synonymous with a style of wine, usually cloyingly sweet and of lower quality, rather than a grape variety.

Over the past decade or so these wrongs are being rectified and there has been a big resurgence in riesling, not only at home, but abroad. When we first started exporting to the USA our agents wouldn't take the variety as there was "zero interest in riesling". Times have changed and we now have trouble in filling their requests for this variety. This not only reflects the general riesling revival but also positive press about New Zealand rieslings. Five Pegasus Bay Rieslings were recently awarded scores of greater than 90/100 points (equivalent of 5 stars) in Robert Parker's Wine Advocate (see previous).



Matthew donaldson (2nd left) with wine writers sam kim, bob campbell mw, paul white wm and john hawkesby at the inaugural in praise of riesling event.

But as Hugh Johnson said, "riesling precisely expresses its origin" and the origin of ours is the Waipara Valley. We believe this produces a very pure and distinctive wine due to its mineral rich soils and special micro-climate. Last autumn we held at Pegasus Bay New Zealand's first conference and wine tasting devoted exclusively to riesling. On the 7th March 2009 the 2nd In Praise of Riesling event will be held at the Pegasus Bay Winery and Restaurant and, as with the last one, it will be in conjunction with other local wineries and the Waipara Valley Winegrowers. You will be treated to a spectacular line-up of top international wines as well as the local product, in association with fine fare from our restaurant. There will be commentary and discussion by experts. The wines will go from steely dry to lusciously sweet, enabling you to see all shades of colour in the wide spread of the peacock's tail of this amazing variety. Come and have your eyes opened and be part of the Riesling Renaissance that is going on. Book early on : [www.inpraiseofriesling.co.nz](http://www.inpraiseofriesling.co.nz) as last years event sold out very quickly.

# From the Prescription pad...

Close your eyes and think of your favourite smell. Then imagine one that is really unpleasant. Neuropsychologists, the people that study such thoughts, will tell you that memories of odours are often formed in youth and frequently have a strong emotional content. That is to say, how much you like or dislike smells can be influenced by emotionally important events which occurred when you experienced them. Perhaps you remember the perfume the love of your life had on the night you first dated? This is in keeping with the fact that smell and taste are amongst the most basic, primitive and important sensations. Discriminating between what is good and harmful to ingest is vital in helping any animal survive and multiply. In spite of this, smell has been called the Cinderella of the senses in humans, because of our apparently poor ability to identify odours, especially compared with man's best friend. Because of this many trust the advice of wine experts who have better noses and palates than ours; or do they?

Researchers from Lincoln University in Canterbury have shown that wine judges' snouts are no more sensitive than novices in detecting wine related smells, but judges are better at recognising and naming them. In fact, they found when novices talked about what they were smelling, it impaired their ability to discriminate and concluded that with them "Some things maybe better left unsaid". This may not be news to you as you may have worked out that all the talking that politicians do impairs their ability to recognise what is happening in the real world!

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scanning can show up not only brain anatomy, but which parts become active when you appreciate sensations, think, or do tasks. In an Italian study a group of wine experts and casual wine drinkers were fed liquids through a tube while having their heads scanned. The brain's response was more complex and wide-spread to wine than to non-alcoholic, sugary drinks. In addition, areas known to be involved in appreciating smells and tastes were activated differently in wine experts and casual drinkers. In both groups the front part of the brain, particularly the frontal lobe, was involved, but in casual drinkers it affected primarily areas which receive the signals for smell and taste as well as other areas known to be involved in processing emotions, including a structure called the amygdala. In them activity spread into the right frontal brain region. In wine experts there was a much wider spread of activity in the left frontal lobe of the brain into regions particularly involved in the integration and analysis of smells and tastes. Brain regions which lie just above our eyes in the frontal lobes, and are thought to be involved in the reward value or pleasure of these sensations, lit up in both groups. The researchers concluded that with experience and training, the brain works differently. In other words, the appreciation of an expert differs from that of an amateur. Similar processes probably underlie the phenomenon of acquired taste in everything from art to music.

Now, as interesting as though this is, you and I know that drinking a glass of our favourite wine is a holistic experience, usually in pleasant surroundings with good friends and frequently as part of a meal. We don't normally sit around in scanners sipping wine blind out of tubes. Even if we are not wine experts we know what we like and are drinking. We don't need anyone to tell us; or do we? There is evidence that your brain may actually alter your appreciation to give you a consistent holistic experience, even when this is in conflict with reality. Take for example, an experiment carried out at the Bordeaux University where experienced tasters were asked to describe the aromas and flavours of white wine. They used descriptors typical for white wines, such as citrus fruits, peaches and honey. They were then asked to evaluate a red wine, which was in fact exactly the same white wine with a tasteless food colouring. They then used words

typical of red wines as their eyes had fooled them and their brain reinterpreted the sensations.

Come back to our MRI scanner and subjects sipping wines through tubes. When given a series of wines to taste after being told how much each one cost, a group of US subjects not only said they preferred the dearer ones, but with these their brains became more active in that region which I said is involved in experiencing pleasure. In fact, all of the wines these people were drinking were the same. They didn't just say they enjoyed the "expensive" wine more, but their brain altered their experience of reality so that this was actually the case.

Take the opposite situation where something is discounted to a basement bargain price. Another group of US scientists sold people an "energy" drink before they did a series of puzzles. Even although the drinks were the same, those who had paid the full price regularly solved more puzzles than those with discounted drinks. In other words, their brains changed reality in line with their expectations.

Well, you might say, this might be the case with airy fairy things, like smell, taste and solving problems, but what about something really definite, like pain. As a medico I am well aware that placebos are very effective in many patients. These not only include fake medications but sham manipulations and the like. In fact, it is generally accepted that at least a third of patients will report benefit. Now, it turns out that people don't just say they are better, they actually are. People given fake pain relieving cream before electric shocks not only say the shocks are less painful but in an MRI scanner, the activity of pain sensitive brain regions is decreased. The brain has modulated their experience of reality to fit their expectations.

This why "blind wine tasting" is so valuable. You don't know what you are drinking so your brain can not fool you into thinking one thing or another. You can form an independent evaluation without being detracted by preconceptions. We make our wines in small batches and blend these together in different proportions to make the final wine before it goes to bottling. It's much more work but we feel we get a better result. Batches are blended together in different proportions to produce a number of different possible wines and these are always assessed blind. It means that some batches, or parts of them, maybe eliminated so you end up with a smaller final volume than you wanted. Our aim, however, is to produce the best blend and not just one which would give us the largest volume. We don't want our brains to start playing tricks on us just because it might be commercially convenient.

I would encourage you to assess wines blind if you evaluating them. On the other hand, when serving a glass to your friends, knowing what the wine is might actually make them enjoy it more, depending on its reputation. Call it snob value if you like, but it seems a scientific fact.

Cheers,


## A CHANGE TO ORDERING WINE OVER THE INTERNET

Up until now if you have wanted to order over the internet you had to go to a special web page that was not available on our main site. This has changed & now if you would prefer to place your mail order via the internet simply go to [www.pegasusbay.com](http://www.pegasusbay.com). Click on "online shop" and follow the instructions from there. In order to get privileged mail order pricing you simply need to register for the online shop which should be a very quick and easy process. You only need to register once for the shop and you will be given a login to use for future purchases. Our Pegasus Bay as well as Main Divide wines can be ordered from the same on-line shop. [www.pegasusbay.com](http://www.pegasusbay.com)

## WINE GIFTS IN THE UK

You are now able to have friends or relatives in the UK receive Pegasus Bay and Main Divide wines without any effort on your part. Simply contact [service@mustwines.co.uk](mailto:service@mustwines.co.uk) and they will be delivered. What a great idea for Christmas, the New Year and beyond.

## BEL CANTO: THE NEW FOAL OF PEGASUS

Pegasus has just given birth. It's a stallion called Bel Canto (beautiful singing) and its well known elder sister is Aria (operatic solo song). Bel Canto is as muscley, firm and dry, as Aria is soft and luscious. They are both made from essentially the same fruit, late harvest riesling with a proportion of shrivelled noble botrytis, but there the similarity ends. Bel Canto has been partially fermented by its indigenous wild yeasts in barrels (previously used and old to avoid oak flavours, but to allow greater fullness and texture). Aria, on the other hand, is fermented completely with selected neutral yeasts at cold temperatures in stainless steel to preserve its varietal purity. Our experience is that dry rieslings do not age quite as well as those with some residual sweetness. Thus while Aria can be expected to improve over 5 years and last a decade or more, Bel Canto should perhaps be drunk within 4-6 years.



## Recent Seasons

The summer of 2003 was excellent. Early autumn rain was followed by a long period of splendid, settled weather. January 2004 was outrageously hot with a succession of days over 40°C in the shade in the vineyard. Fortunately, February was cooler, slowing premature ripening and bringing the season back into balance. The 2005 vintage was marked by cool, damp weather over flowering, which produced a yield well below average but resulted in wines of excellent concentration. The weather in 2006 was very even throughout the growing season, resulting in balanced wines from good, but not excessive, crops. Blustery winds in spring impaired pollination and lead to a small 2007 crop, giving extra richness and flavour to the well ripened fruit. Drought conditions were staved off by a mid-summer downpour in 2008. There followed beautiful weather. A period of rain in the latter part of autumn encouraged the growth of noble botrytis in riesling.

## Current Vintages/Releases

### PEGASUS BAY RIESLING 2008

Waipara has unique soils and a climate that are capable of bringing out the magic in riesling. In a comprehensive tasting of more than 50 New Zealand wineries **Pegasus Bay was one of the only 2 riesling producers** recently recommended by Robert Parker's Wine Advocate (see above) and our rieslings have been awarded **super classic** status by Michael Cooper in his book *Classic Wines of New Zealand*. This vintage will show you why. As mentioned above, autumn rain resulted in a proportion of the crop becoming botrytic. Some producers became concerned and picked early to minimise this but we held on until fine weather arrived and these berries became raisined and noble. Our 2008 has thus been given extra concentration and flavours reminiscent of apricots, peaches and honeysuckle. It is somewhat different from our usual Pegasus Bay Riesling style but we think it is an exceptional wine. Being released for the first time with this newsletter there are no reviews, but these accolades about the 2007 have been added to the previous ones since our last newsletter.

*Another classic in the making, this beauty has gentle sweetness and lovely lemony acidity with a slight spritz to ensure its freshness. **A stunning riesling.*** Sam Kim. The Press NZ.

*...In Waipara Pegasus Bay still reigns supreme. Their riesling is universally acknowledged as the **best in the country** and the 2007 will cement that reputation.* Charles Gill. Taranaki Daily News.

Voted the **best riesling from 2007** by the New Zealand Listener.

While this is ready to drink on release we expect it to show wonderful bottle development in the next year or so.

### PEGASUS BAY SAUVIGNON SEMILLON 2008

Our traditional French blend of sauvignon blanc and semillon is certainly not a straight up and down New Zealand savié. By blending semillon into the wine we aim to give it more complexity and longevity. Wild fermentation in old barrels, along with aging on its yeast lees adds palatal richness and depth. We regard the 2008 as being one of the best we have produced and you are getting the first chance to try it as it has been under wraps until now. This, however, is how the 2007 was received.

It was **awarded 95/100 points in Robert Parker's Wine Advocate** (see earlier), which is the highest score ever awarded to a New World Sauvignon Blanc based wine in the history of the magazine. For the 2nd vintage in a row it was the highest scoring New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc based wine in an extensive line-up evaluated in New York. *Musky aromas of lemon-lime, lavender, spices and floral honey, with a slight leesiness adding complexity..... As fat as this is it is also classically dry and structured for at least a few years of development in the bottle. **92/100 points*** Stephen Tanzer International Wine Cellar USA.

*Lush, complex flavours and a dose of funky mineral-match flavours set the wine apart. The feather bed palate is great. **95/100 points*** Bob Campbell MW. Gourmet Traveller. Australia.

## PEGASUS BAY CHARDONNAY 2007

This wine was made in the tradition of the great White Burgundies with hand selection of fruit and natural wild primary and secondary (malo-lactic) fermentations being carried out in the barrels of French artisan coopers. We were particularly careful with our choice of oak and limited its impact by using large barrels (puncheons) of highest quality, only 30% of which were new, and removing it from these to complete final maturation in tank before bottling. The naturally low fruiting clone, from which this is made, had its crop level reduced even further by cool spring weather, giving the wine additional concentration. It is a wine we are proud of and sees the first light of day with this newsletter so wine-writers have not yet had a chance to assess it. We would suggest putting it away for a month or 2 before trying it. Here are some comments about the 2006 which we believe is very similar.

*Waipara's **most distinguished** winery is Pegasus Bay ..... A powerful, classy North Canterbury Chardonnay with substantial body and rich grapefruit and peach flavours, slight nutty while rounded and long. **5 stars*** Michael Cooper NZ Listener.

*Impressively concentrated wine with ripe peach, citrus and stone fruit flavours interwoven with classy oak .... **distinctive wine with character. 93/100 points. 5 stars*** Bob Campbell MW - Gourmet Traveller. Australia

*Nutty, toasty aroma, strong sweet, grapefruit flavours, beautifully balanced with smokey, creamy oak, **tasting great right now**, but will continue to develop for some time yet.* Glenda Neill. Vinote Wine Cellars.

## PEGASUS BAY PINOT NOIR 2006

We use traditional Burgundian techniques to make our Pinot Noir, including natural primary and secondary fermentations by indigenous micro-organisms. Primary fermentation is carried out in small vats which are gently plunged manually to avoid excessive extraction. This wine was then matured for 18 months in oak barriques from artisan Burgundian coopers. There are also Magnums available of this wine. It has received excellent reviews and these are a sample.

*I am not sure whether the secret is relatively old vines or low crop yields, or both, but this delivers a concentrated and powerful wine every year. **5 stars, 95/100 points.*** Bob Campbell MW - Gourmet Traveller. Australia.

*The Canterbury area delivers real potential to stretch Pinot to the limit of aroma, flavour and structure. **5 stars, 95/100 points.*** Nick Stock WBM Magazine, Australia.

*The flight of Pinot Noirs continued to illustrate their Burgundian influence ..... Very well balanced on the palate, slightly grainy tannins, dark fruit but not the usual black cherry. This has damson and mulberries to the fore, again that beguiling sense of earthiness. Introverted on the very natural elegant dry finish. **Superb! 92/100 points.*** Neil Martin, Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate, USA.

*Very sophisticated and complex with a captivating, juicy quality and terrific cut. The tannins are fine-grained and firm and the long, dry finish reveals an excellent spine. **92/100 points.*** Stephen Tanzer, International Wine Cellar, USA

*Streamlined with a vivid beam of crushed stone, wild berry, black plum, sandalwood and cola flavours.....a spicy finish, tinged by a hint of graphite and orange peel. **90/100 points.*** Daniel Sogg, Wine Spectator USA.

## PEGASUS BAY MERLOT CABERNET 2004

We had a very hot January 2004 which undoubtedly helped shape this wine, allowing us to pick physiologically ripe fruit with excellent balance. We felt it was so good we put some into more slowly maturing magnums and have put aside a few for our mail order customers. While predominately merlot, cabernet franc, cabernet sauvignon and malbec support and enhance it. Being produced from a blend of classical Bordeaux grapes we made it in the traditional Claret fashion, aerating the fermenting juice by splashing and then pumping it back over the cap of floating

skins. After gentle pressing the wine was matured in oak barriques for 2 years. It underwent spontaneous natural malo-lactic fermentation. Here are some comments about it.

*Merlot is custom made for New Zealand ..... Australia can't make good examples of merlot ..... put this one on the table because it is **simply the best NZ red I have tasted** in the last 6 months.* Gavin Beere, Franklin Life Newspaper NZ

*Appealing deep colour and **aromas that leap out of the glass.** There are rich plums and blackcurrants and velvety oak tannins.* Peter Shaw. Waikato Times. NZ.

***Good warmth and hearty texture** fitting together well for dinner.* Peter Saunders. Food and Beverage Magazine. NZ.

*Plums, spice and blackberry flavours dominate. Smooth, soft wine with a touch of nutmeg on the finish. **Drinking very well right now.*** Glenda Neil. www.vinote.com

## PEGASUS BAY MERLOT CABERNET 2005

2005 was an outstanding vintage for Bordeaux varieties. Extremely low crops coupled with a warm dry summer and settled Autumn conditions allowed a little extra "hang time" on the vines and has resulted in an extra dimension of ripeness. This wine was made in the same way as the 2004. We regard it as one of the best we have made. As it has only recently been released, the reviews are only just starting to arrive.

*Good concentration of spice, herb and coffee flavours. **Drinking well now** and enjoyed by all judges.* Michael Cooper. Wine State Magazine. Australia.

## PEGASUS BAY BEL CANTO 2008 (see previous)

This is our new Dry Reserve Riesling. It is definitely made to go with food. The wine is full of citrus fruits, especially lemon and limes, with a hint of orange skin. The palate is concentrated and weighty with a long, lingering, grapefruity finish. Both in its aroma/flavour spectrum and structure, this is not like riesling as most people know it, and it is not meant to be. While you can drink it now it needs to be put away for a year or 2 to really appreciate fully what it has to offer. It is being released for the first time with this newsletter.

## PEGASUS BAY ARIA 2007

The fruit for this wine was selectively hand harvested on multiple occasions over a 6 week period. The aim being to harvest ripe riesling with a level of noble botrytis of around 30%. When the fermentation stopped there was a perfect balance between residual sweetness, acidity and alcohol.

*Very distinctive style. An opulent, luscious palate that's sizzling with acid; stays crunchy and finishes long and bold with kumquat flavour. **95/100.*** Max Stock WBM Magazine. Australia.

***A stunner that will get even better.*** Warren Barton. The Dominion Post. NZ.

*Unusually **fantastic balance** and tension for such an intensely flavoursome, sweet, sensuous wine. **Delicious!*** David Stewart. True Wines. NZ

*Elegant, slightly honeyed, with lovely ripeness and richness.....**great harmony.*** Michael Cooper. Winestate Magazine. Australia.

## PEGASUS BAY ENCORE 2007 (375MLS)

This wine is only made in special years and 2007 was one of these. In spite of low crop levels we left a small amount of riesling on the vines into the late autumn and winter, allowing the morning dews and sunny days to work their magic. We then hand harvested the crop, making multiple passes, each separated by a number of days, and selecting only the most perfectly shrunken, botrytic berries. The small amount of juice obtained was left to ferment at a low temperature over the rest of the winter to produce this stunning dessert wine, which resembles an Alsatian Selection des Grains Nobles or German trockenbeerenauslese.

This wine has intense aromas and flavours suggestive of pineapples, passion-fruit, tropical spices, mandarins and apricots. It is infused with impressions of honey-suckle and honey-comb, which come from the botrytis. While mouth-filling, luscious and sweet it has spine tingling acidity, which keeps it in balance and help draw out its lingering after-taste. It will progressively open up and blossom over the next 1-4 years and we expect it to live for a decade or more.

*Charms with its nose of acacia honey and lanolin, with touches of mandarin and star fruit on the unctuous palate. 92/100 pinots.* Robert Parker's Wine Advocate, USA.

*Honeyed with vibrant lemon, lime and apricot flavours, sweet and rich and balanced acidity.* Michael Cooper. Winestate. Australia.

## PEGASUS BAY VIRTUOSO 2006

This reserve chardonnay was made in the same way and from the same block as our 2007 Chardonnay mentioned above. It came, however, from our lowest cropping plot of old vines on their own roots. It is powerful and concentrated, but yet elegant and fresh. It is being released for the first time with this newsletter so that winewriters have not put pen to paper about it. This, however, was said about the 2005.

*Reminded me of a **Corton-Charlemagne**, though the palate could benefit from a few more months in bottle .....outstanding wine. 93/100* Robert Parker's Wine Advocate. USA.

*This is, without doubt, **one of NZ's very best chardonnays** I have ever tasted. Worth every cent.* Mike East. Avenues Magazine. NZ.

*Strong buttered lemon, mineral flavours that extend right through the palate and last for minutes. A strong, powerful chardonnay with structure. **Exceptionally good.*** Vino Fino Newsletter. NZ.

## PEGASUS BAY PRIMA DONNA 2004

In keeping with our philosophy of holding back magnums to give mail order customers a chance to purchase these bigger and more slowly maturing bottles we have a small amount of stock we can offer.

***Dense, rich** with sweet fruit flavours that show succulent black cherry and plum interwoven with classy French oak. A big, complex wine with great cellaring potential. **5 stars 96/100*** Bob Campbell. Gourmet Traveller Wine. Australia

*A pinot **worth its price tag.** Structured with fine grained tannins and vibrant acidity, the wine is savagely savoury and yet fruit driven. **94/100*** Leslie Sbrocco USA www.winereviewonline.com

***Powerful and silky textured,** with highly concentrated flavours of plums and spices, refined and lingering. **5 stars.*** Michael Cooper, Winestate Magazine. Australia.

*Big, rich and sweet with a **texture of liquid silk.** Wonderful concentration and generous strawberry and spice flavours. Boasts excellent structure and grip and lingering notes of spice cake and ginger go along with the sweet fruit. **91/100*** Steve Tanzer. International Wine Cellar USA.

## PEGASUS BAY PRIMA DONNA 2006

Prima Donna is a blend of the best barrels of pinot we have from each vintage and, as usual, this has come from our oldest, lowest cropping vines. It is made in exactly the same way as the 2006 Pegasus Bay Pinot Noir mentioned above. This vintage of Prima Donna is being released for the first time with this newsletter so we do not really have any reviews, but one commentator who had a sneak preview, has said ...

*Firm grip on the palate and impressive weight. Its concentration suggests that it will blossom in 3 or 4 years time. 91/100.* Robert Parker's Wine Advocate. USA.

We agree it is a big wine with a lot of ripe tannins, which are holding it a little tight knit and closed at present, but it has huge potential.

## PEGASUS BAY MAESTRO 2003

This wine is no longer available in standard bottle size but we have winkled out of our cellar a few magnums. While you can drink this happily now it would be a great wine to put in your cellar for several years. Here's what others have said about it.

*If anyone told Pegasus Bay that Bordeaux-style wine couldn't be made in North Canterbury, they weren't listening.... A dark, dense, merlot, malbec, cabernet blend that packs a **powerful wallop but wraps it in a warm, velvet glove.*** Karl duFresne Sunday Star Times. New Zealand.

*Dense, with tobacco leaf, dark chocolate, berry and spicy oak flavours ..... power, length, rich texture, warmth and complexity. **91/100*** Bob Campbell MW. Gourmet Travel Wine. Australia.

***A striking wine,** helped by having the time to unfold and develop its complex flavours. A lovely, fruit statement, underlined by a warm, almost sensual texture, which adds a lot of drinkability in a serious style. **Quite amazing.*** Peter Saunders. Food and Beverage Magazine. NZ.

***A stunning red wine** to enjoy over 3 meal courses - cheese to start, meat for the main and chocolate biscotti for dessert.* Sue Courtney www.vinote.com

## PEGASUS BAY MAESTRO 2005

We only make Maestro in special vintages and 2005 was definitely one of these with ultra-low crops producing a most wonderfully concentrated, fruity but well structured wine. As with our Merlot Cabernet, we use the traditional winemaking methods which have made Bordeaux Claret so famous. This Maestro is made predominately from merlot (75%) and malbec (15%), which provide a robust core of well ripened fruit. Just a touch of cabernet franc and cabernet sauvignon has been added to give it a little extra zip.

*Masses for flavour with chocolate, dark berry, anise, liquorice, spicy oak and forest floor. **95/100 5 stars.*** Huon Hooke and Bob Campbell MW. Gourmet Traveller. Australia

***Wow!** Huge, with intense berry aromas and hints of leather and smoke. Palate is full-on with good complexity ....this wine will continue to develop and improve. **Get some.*** Tizwine.com.

***A deliciously dense, rich, velvety, immensely satisfying wine** of softly spoken power. **One to savour.*** David Stewart. True Wines NZ.