



**Cameron Douglas** is New Zealand's first and only Master Sommelier. He is a Senior Lecturer at AUT University in Auckland, local and international wine judge, wine commentator and wine educator as well speaker and presenter in New Zealand and internationally. Cameron is also an examiner with the Court of Master Sommeliers Worldwide. He writes the wine lists for a variety of establishments including Merediths, Mekong Baby, Nanam Republic and Michelin Starred New York establishment The Musket Room.

# Always time for **bubbles**

The technique of blending wines from different parcels of land to create the final blend for second ferment in bottle has underpinned the great sparkling wines of the world for many decades. The well-documented foundation work of French Monk Dom Perignon has been studied and emulated then perfected by other sparkling wine producers globally. The title of this technique is the Methode Traditionnelle. In France's Champagne region specifically, the process is known as Methode Champenoise. Methode Traditionnelle is the same process as Methode Champenoise - blending batches of wine (as few as two or three and as many as several dozen) this forms a Cuvee (a blend). This blend is then refermented inside a glass bottle or tank to produce bubbles. The wine is then aged on its yeast lees for several months or years. This resting time produces an autolysis of the yeast through the wine from the degradation of the spent yeast cells. Bready, biscuit or brioche aromas associated with sparkling wine comes from this effect.

New Zealand's sparkling wine production has been built on the foundation of understanding the Methode Traditionnelle technique and growing ripe fruit with naturally high acid to make base wines suitable for secondary fermentation in bottle or tank. From some fine examples in the early 1980s the

wines from the 2000s have found favour with many buyers. From Auckland to Central Otago, there are a growing number of sparkling wine producers. The quality ranges from average to very high, with some examples that could rival Champagne in a blind-tasting.

New Zealand's Methode Traditionnelle wines have yet to gain the popularity of their counterparts in Champagne, but we appear to be on the right pathway to recognition and success, if recent increase in exports to the USA are in any way indicative. New Zealand cannot compete on volume, but it can compete on quality. Competition is tough with high volumes of Cava (Spanish sparkling) and Prosecco (Italian sparkling) flooding global markets, alongside Champagne and other French sparkling wine doing the same.

The key advantages for New Zealand sparkling wine in a global economy are high quality at lower volumes, freshness and clear flavour profiles, rarity and competitive price points.

Whatever your sparkling wine selection, make sure you and your team can discuss the provenance and production methods of sparkling wine confidently with your customers and focus on local product first.



**1 NO.1 FAMILY ESTATE CUVÉE VIRGINIE  
METHODE TRADITIONNELLE 2009**

Sophisticated bouquet with a great vintage and bottle age offering aromas of complexity, elegance and total charm. Baked goods, Portuguese lemon tart and stone fruits, old rose. On the palate – a finely beaded mousse cushions flavours of citrus and peach, fine autolysis development and crisp lengthy finish. A delightful wine with several years of pleasure yet to be discovered.

**Points 97**  
**RRP: \$85.00**  
**Distributor: No.1 Family Estate**  
**Phone: (03) 572 9876**  
**www.no1familyestate.co.nz**

**2 NO.1 FAMILY ESTATE NO.1 ROSÉ  
METHODE TRADITIONNELLE NV**

Attractive, fresh, lively and precise bouquet. Aromas of flowers, light red fruits, cherry and just picked strawberry, mild to moderate autolysis and a touch of intrigue. On the palate – crisp, fresh, dry and packed with a gentle charm. The mousse is silky and fine, flavours balanced and elegant with a brioche and lightly toasted autolysis charm; very long finish.

**Points 96**  
**RRP: \$45.00**  
**Distributor: No.1 Family Estate**  
**Phone: (03) 572 9876**  
**www.no1familyestate.co.nz**

**3 NO.1 FAMILY ESTATE NO.1 ASSEMBLÉ  
METHODE TRADITIONNELLE NV**

Alluring and intense bouquet, aromas of bread and brioche, peach and citrus, a light white flower note adds charm and depth, quite complex overall. On the palate – generous, full, rich in flavour and presence, flavours of roasted stone fruits and baked lemon, butter brioche and Arnott's Round Wine biscuit. Fine persistent mousse and lengthy finish.

**Points 96**  
**RRP: \$32.00**  
**Distributor: No.1 Family Estate**  
**Phone: (03) 572 9876**  
**www.no1familyestate.co.nz**

**4 NO.1 FAMILY ESTATE NO.1 CUVÉE  
METHODE TRADITIONNELLE NV**

Very attractive bouquet, complex and sophisticated without being pushy, aromas of brioche and toasty autolysis set against a background of citrus and white strawberry. On the palate – fresh, crisp and delicious; flavours of grapefruit and apple, some lemon and plenty of autolysis undertones, fine mousse and lengthy finish. What's not to like!

**Points 95**  
**RRP: \$36.00**  
**Distributor: No.1 Family Estate**  
**Phone: (03) 5729876**  
**www.no1familyestate.co.nz**

**5 AKARUA BRUT METHODE  
TRADITIONNELLE 2011**

A bouquet with finesse and charm, fine autolysis with mild yeastiness leads to a citrus, pear and white peach aromas. On the palate – fresh, dry and totally charming, fine yet bold mousse, crisp and fresh acidity, white peach and citrus led fruit flavours and a lengthy complex finish. A delightful example.

**Points 94**  
**RRP: \$48.00**  
**Distributor: Hancocks**  
**Phone: (03) 445 4292**  
**Website: www.akarua.co.nz**

**6 AKARUA BRUT ROSÉ NV METHODE  
TRADITIONNELLE**

Complex bouquet of finely tuned autolysis melded with light red fruit and delicate rose bouquet. On the palate – crisp, fresh light red fruit flavours, bold mousse with a silken to course texture then silken again, plenty of refreshing acidity and long delicate finish. A lovely complex wine.

**Points 93**  
**RRP: \$37.00**  
**Distributor: Hancocks**  
**Phone: (03) 445 4292**  
**www.akarua.co.nz**



## [ tasting notes ]

### **7** AKARUA BRUT METHODE TRADITIONNELLE NV

A bouquet with ripe white-fleshed fruits and plenty of citrus equalled by a fresh yeasty autolysis, moderate complexity and fine attack. On the palate – powerful and plump mousse carrying flavours of lemon and apple, some white peach; crunchy fresh mousse that is quite explosive, dry, crisp and refreshing finish.

**Points 91**

**RRP: \$34.00**

**Distributor: Hancocks**

**Phone: (03) 445 4292**

**www.akarua.co.nz**

### **8** AOTEA BY SEIFRIED METHODE TRADITIONNELLE NV

Totally charming and attractive bouquet with a fine balance between fruit, yeast autolysis and complexity; aromas of lemon, apple, grapefruit and white peach, warm bready, yeasty feel and decent complexity. On the palate – crisp, fresh and dry; flavours of apple and lemon then a light biscuit note, decent mousse attack and a dry finish.

**Points 90**

**RRP: \$39.00**

**Distributor: Seifried Estate**

**Phone: (021) 533 890**

**www.seifried.co.nz**

### **9** BROWN BROTHERS KING VALLEY PROSECCO NV

Quite a fruity bouquet with a layer of charm from fleshy fruit scents and a light yeasty autolysis note. On the palate – crisp, fresh, fruity and just dry; flavours of citrus and apple then a hint of sweetness followed by a crushed stone note; fluffy and bold mousse with large bubble, balanced, even finish. Overall a pleasant drink and will pair well with food.

**Points 82**

**RRP: \$17.99**

**Distributor: Taylor Brown Limited**

**Phone: (09) 447 3801**

**www.brownbrothers.com.au**

### **10** BROWN BROTHERS SPARKLING MOSCATO NV

Very fragrant with fresh fruits and floral aromas, simple forward and distinctive. On the palate – very fruity as a Moscato should be with a lemon crisp, white peach and lemonade flavours, off-dry style with a sweet lick, easy big bubble mousse and sweet finish.

**Points 82**

**RRP: \$16.99**

**Distributor: Taylor Brown Limited**

**Phone: (09) 447 3801**

**www.brownbrothers.com.au**

Wines are scored out of 100 points and are listed in no particular order. Numbers are not indicative of a ranking.

