

'Thirst For' August Snippets 2015

– The Riddling Has Begun

It is nearly Spring already – can't believe how fast this year is passing.

Several exciting things have happened in the last month.

We have received really good reviews from both Raymond Chan and Michael Cooper for our 2013 and 2014 wines. Tony is delighted with both the comments and ratings from Raymond and Michael. If you haven't already read the reviews, you can find Raymond's here <http://goo.gl/0wjZ8F> and Michael's reviews are on his website <http://michaelcooper.co.nz/> (you need to be a member to access his tasting notes).

The gazebo out the front of the winery is nearing completion and the base for the pizza oven is complete



Gazebo



Pizza oven base



Riddling racks

But the most exciting thing that is happening at present, is the **RIDDLING IS UNDERWAY**. This is the first stage in disgorging our *blanc de blancs*.

So here's a quick summary of the making of the first de la terre *methode champenoise* so far:

- Our 'methode' is a *blanc de blancs* – this means that we have used only chardonnay grapes for this wine ("white from whites")
- Grapes for this style of wine are picked earlier than grapes used to make still wines – we want to capture the fresh acidity with the sugar levels at approximately 19 Brix
- The base wine is made pretty much as you would make a still wine, fermenting the grape juice in tanks.
- The wine is then bottled with an addition of yeast and sugar, called the *liqueur de tirage*. At this stage the bottles are sealed with crown caps and then stored away while the secondary fermentation (this creates the bubbles) and aging process is complete
- We removed our 2013 *blanc de blancs* from storage last month where it had been sitting on its yeast lees for approximately 20 months. The wine was turned upside down and shaken to re-suspend the yeast lees that had settled to the bottom of the bottles.
- The bottles were then placed in the riddling racks, called *pupitres*, with the crown cap pointing down. The bottles are 'riddled' every day - slightly shaken through turning then dropping back into the racks to jolt the sediment down the bottle. The purpose of riddling, called *remuage*, is to collect the yeast in the neck of the bottle so that it can be removed during the disgorging process. To view a short video of Tony riddling (supervised by Gracie) [click here](#).

- Every few days the bottles are individually removed from the racks and held up to the light to ensure the yeast is moving down to the neck area and not settling on the shoulder of the bottle.
- Riddling will continue for the next few weeks, until Tony is satisfied that the yeast lees have settled in the neck and the wine clarity is good.

The next stage is the actual disgorging process which we will tell you about next month - once we have figured out how to work all the disgorging gear we have purchased!

We will be re-opening late in September – will let you know the date in our newsletter next month.

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