

# The Inspiring and Iconic Women Winemakers of New Zealand's Hawke's Bay Wine Region

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Hawke's Bay may be the most beautiful major wine region of the world. Located on the southeastern coast of New Zealand's North Island, it is the country's oldest wine-producing area. It encompasses a variety of terroirs that produce fruit and ultimately wines that are remarkable.



**Vineyard Overlooking Hawke's Bay**



**Terrain of Lime Rock Wines**

## Why we visited New Zealand's Hawke's Bay

We study [women winemakers](#) in major wine regions of the world and the factors that may facilitate women's ability to break into the traditionally male-dominated field of winemaking. While our major focus is California, we also report on [prominent international wine regions](#) where women winemakers are receiving increasing recognition.

A leader in promoting gender equality, New Zealand was the first country to grant women the right to vote (in 1893), and three of its recently elected prime ministers have been women. We were interested in knowing whether the country's egalitarian attitudes also extended to women wanting to break into the field of winemaking.

We selected Hawke's Bay because it is the country's oldest wine region and is especially noted for its red wines. Hawke's Bay Bordeaux-style blends are listed among the top wines in the world and as lovers of red wine, we were eager to learn more about the wines that have made the region so renowned, and the women who may have crafted them.



Of the eleven main wine regions in New Zealand, seven are on the North Island and four on the South Island. Marlborough is by far the largest producer of wine grapes with Hawke's Bay being second. Marlborough is mainly known for its Sauvignon Blanc. In contrast, Hawke's Bay is the country's leading producer of red grapes and prides itself for its high-quality Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot blends, Syrah, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and an impressive array of aromatic white wines.

### The Hawke's Bay Women Winemakers

Among the some 76 wineries in Hawke's Bay, we identified six lead women winemakers.<sup>3</sup> Three of the six are well known and have excellent reputations and many years in the industry. Three others are rising

stars, winemakers earlier in their careers and who have been identified as making wine of very high quality. The women all have degrees related to winemaking, were the only or among the few women in their respective classes, and have experience in wine-producing countries other than New Zealand. As a group, they were inspiring, talented, proud of their wine region and their wines, and completely enamored with what they do.

We visited during New Zealand's spring and were warmly welcomed at each and every visit, whether it was in the cellar, the vineyards, or at the "cellar door," the New Zealand term for a tasting room. Our conversations were engaging and informative. We asked what ignited their interest in wine, and sought information about their career path, their advice for achieving success in this field, and, of course, details about the wines crafted.

We first met with veteran winemaker, **Rosie Butler** of *Lime Rock Wines*, located in rural Central Hawke's Bay. Our second conversation was with **Emma Lowe** at *Monowai Estate*. Both of these winemakers work with spouses who are viticulturists. We next met with **Jenny Dobson**, formerly chief winemaker at *Te Awa*, now a consultant winemaker and a legend within the New Zealand wine industry, and then with **Lauren Swift** at *Ash Ridge*, named New Zealand's Young Winemaker of the Year in 2015. We next talked with **Kate Radburn**, former chief winemaker and joint owner of the prominent *Pask Winery* and now starting a new venture. We concluded a very busy week with a conversation with **Julianne Brogden**, who has established her own wine company, *Collaboration Wines*, as the winemaker and owner.

## The Career Paths Taken

### Rosie Butler

*A fascination with science, proficiency in the laboratory, and a curious nature led Rosie to a career in winemaking.*

We arrived at [Lime Rock Wines](#) in the morning of a beautiful clear day. **Rosie Butler**, its esteemed winemaker and owner, greeted us with a huge welcoming smile and then quickly ushered us into her rugged vehicle. It was the perfect time to view the impressive vineyards she and her spouse Rodger Tynan had planted in 2001! (Rodger, Lime Rock's viticulturist, was away the day we visited.)

Rosie grew up not far from the location of Lime Rock Wines. She attended a Catholic high school in Wellington and recalls being “a 15-year-old country girl with no specific plans for her future but to excel in what she did.” When she did not do well on her French exam, she decided to focus on science. This led to working in the hematology laboratory of a local hospital and several years of work and travel in Scotland, England, and with friends, where she tasted and enjoyed various wines. Upon returning, she completed a Certificate of Proficiency in Medical Laboratory Technology (specializing in Hematology and Microbiology) in 1973. She was only 19 at the time.



**Rosie Butler**

The next year, Rosie accepted a lab technician position at Montana Wines in Auckland and also was responsible for quality control. She loved it: “Working in the wine industry was fascinating, and I got hooked on all the facets of wine production.” After a few years, Rosie decided to study enology and attend Roseworthy College in South Australia “because there was not much to choose from [in terms of New Zealand enology programs] in those days,” completing her BSc. in Oenology and Viticulture in 1981. She was one of only two women in her class.

After graduating, Rosie held a number of wine-related positions in Australia and New Zealand, including the position of winemaker at Montana Wines in Gisborne. She and Rodger, an Australian whom she had met at Roseworthy College, married during this period and their son was born in 1991.

Both were working in Australia when two of Rosie’s brothers offered them family land for vineyards in New Zealand. Rosie knew from her years of experience how much work a vineyard and winery would be, but she and Rodger decided to accept the offer nevertheless. Rosie noted, “We did not know how lucky we would be with our vineyard site. It has been an amazing experience.”

**The vineyards.** During our extensive tour of the vineyards, we learned that the site was chosen both for its limestone soils (reflecting this, examples of the 3-million-year-old oysters, scallops, and barnacles uncovered in their vineyard are displayed in the cellar door) and its high north-facing hills. Rodger’s vineyard management is based on “*minimal disturbance* to the soils to preserve natural biological processes and site complexity.” Rosie noted that the steep slopes of the vineyards allow cold-air drainage, thereby protecting the vines from frosts in the Spring (see photo at beginning of article).

**Words of advice.** Rosie has “always worked with men”—she had three brothers—and worked in a rural farming community. This experience proved to be helpful because she still mostly works with men and sees relatively few women at various wine events. Her words of advice for achieving success were to “work on the cellar floor and laboratory, get as much experience as you can in all parts of the industry and travel to other countries.”

**The wines of Lime Rock.** Lime Rock’s red wines, and its 2009 Pinot Noir, caught the attention of Jancis Robinson, the renowned wine writer. We know why, having now tasted two of their highly rated Pinot Noirs—the *White Knuckle Hill Pinot Noir 2013* and the *Kota Pinot Noir 2010*. The *White Knuckle Hill Pinot Noir*, named for Rodger’s experiences while driving a tractor on the steep slopes of the vineyard, was luscious with delicious red fruit, velvety tannins, and fine minerality. The *Kota Pinot Noir*, named for the ‘kota’ or large fossilized oyster shells found in the soil and that contribute to the unique character of this wine, displayed bright cherry and wild raspberry flavors, along with soft tannins.

Lime Rock also produces Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Gris, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, and Grüner Veltliner. These award-winning white and red wines, all made with estate-grown grapes, are known for their elegance, pure fruit, balance, mineral character, and length. Approximately 3,000 to 4,000 cases are produced each year.

We brought back a bottle of their excellent *Late Harvest Sauvignon Blanc 2016*, which the ever-gracious Rosie generously had delivered to us when we forgot it at her cellar door!



**Fossilized Oyster Shell**

## Emma Lowe

*“What attracts me to wine is all the possibilities, challenges.”*

Open to adventure may be a good way to describe **Emma Lowe**, born into a farming family in Christchurch, and the winemaker and owner of [Monowai Estate](#). In her last year at a private high school in Hamilton, Emma saw the potential for a career in wine and decided to enter the four-year Enology program at the University of Adelaide in Australia. During her third year, Emma took part in an exchange program with UC Davis in California that she much enjoyed and had a placement at Kendall-Jackson in Sonoma, where she was introduced to wine production.



**Emma Lowe and Marcelo Nunez**

After graduating in 1996 she took a position in Hunter Valley, Australia, but her love for adventure soon led her to Europe and a family-owned winery in Switzerland. After assisting at a second Swiss winery, Emma asked herself, “Where can I go next?”

She began consulting and making wine for the English market, and traveled to South Africa and then to France. (It was at this point that her mother said to Emma, “Don’t tell me about it until after you have done it.”) Seizing the opportunity to improve her skiing, she briefly worked in a bar at a ski area and then at a winery in Chile “as it would be good for my Spanish.” Unexpectedly, she found

herself in charge of building and equipping the laboratory for the winery!

In 2001 she moved on to Santa Helena, a large winery in Santiago, and managed one of its several wineries for two vintages before receiving an offer of land from her parents. It was in Crownthorpe, a newer district of the Hawke’s Bay region. (As can be seen in the photo below, the soil of the Monowai vineyards is a thin layer of silt loam over several meters of red river gravels. In the distance are rolling limestone hills.)

Emma accepted her parent’s offer in 2002, and that same year married Marcelo Nunez, a Chilean vineyard manager. Together with her parents, they “picked up roots and stones on the bare land, and began planting vines.” She established her own label, *Monowai Estate*, meaning “One-Water” in reference to the fact that a single expanse of ocean separates Marcelo’s and her respective homelands. Their winery was built in 2005 in time for their first vintage. She and Marcelo have two children, ages 7 and 9. Her parents have moved to live close by, and Emma

feels fortunate that they are so supportive with the children and in the vineyards and winery. Many women Emma knows go part-time when they have children. “Men in New Zealand are still quite traditional.” She mentioned attending a NZ winery engineering conference and saw very few women: “one day there was a total of two women, and on the second day, a total of three.”

**Words of advice.** Emma recommended, “Start at the beginning and learn along the way,” international experience, and doing a vintage before enrolling in an enology program to understand what is involved. With regard to personal qualities, she sees flexibility and confidence as key.

**The wines of Monowai Estate.** The Monowai Estate vineyards and winery are the first to be located in Crownthorpe. The upper reaches of the Ngaruroro River Valley shelter the inland, elevated terraces of this district, making it perfect for premium cool-climate style wines. In addition to its Pinot Noirs, Monowai produces top-quality, estate-grown Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Gris, Merlot, and Chardonnay. The current production is around 17,000 cases a year.



**Vineyards and Terrain of the Monowai Estate**

Monowai Estate was named ‘Hawke’s Bay Winery of the Year’ at the 2017 New York International Wine Competition, and was awarded three gold medals for its *2015 Sauvignon Blanc*, *2015 Pinot Gris* and *2013 Pinot Noir*.

The winery does not have a cellar door and thus we were not able to taste Emma’s award-winning wines. Instead, we purchased a bottle of her *Monowai Upper Reaches Pinot Noir 2015* to bring home with us. (“Upper Reaches” vintages are made from outstanding parcels of wine.) This wine has received excellent reviews.

## Jenny Dobson

*“Wine needs to be an expression of the place, it needs to be made with passion, it has to have an identity”*

**Jenny Dobson** is a person of great passion and resolve. For her, winemaking is a lifestyle, *not* a job.

Always interested in aromas—all her childhood memories are aroma-related—Jenny decided to study science at Otago University in Dunedin after graduating from high school in Timaru on New Zealand’s South Island. (No universities in New Zealand offered studies in enology at that time.) Jenny shifted her studies to food science and chose wine-related topics for course assignments. She completed her degree in 1978 and promptly traveled to France’s Burgundy region to learn more about winemaking.

Her first experience was at Domaine Dujac, where she apprenticed with the legendary winemaker Jacques Seysses, and worked in the cellar and vineyard for two vintages. “I always have viewed this experience as the foundation of my wine-growing philosophy. In 1979, in France, wine was working with nature, as much it was a business.”

Jenny then moved to Paris and worked with the British wine expert and wine merchant, Stephen Spurrier, teaching wine-appreciation courses and further developing her palate. (Spurrier is well known as the organizer of the 1976 Judgment of Paris.) It was during this period that she met Charles at a tasting, the man she later married. Charles is British and was a wine merchant at the time.

From there, Jenny moved in 1983 to accept a cellar master or *Maître de Chais* position at Chateau Sénéjac in the Haut Médoc, the first woman to hold such a position in the Bordeaux.

Jenny noted that “...there were no women in the cellar, and I was so busy doing [wine production] that I found little prejudice.” She was highly successful during her ten years there, and her red wines became renowned. “The Red Queen”, a phrase often used to describe Jenny, likely had its origin here.<sup>4</sup>

A return, first to Australia and then to New Zealand, was prompted by Jenny’s experiencing the proverbial glass ceiling and she and Charles wanting to rear their three children in an English-speaking country. Hawke’s Bay was a good fit with her Bordeaux experience and also offered



**Jenny Dobson**

the possibility of excellent viticulture. She held consultant positions at Sacred Hill, Te Awa, and a few other wineries, and in 1998 accepted the Chief Winemaker position at Te Awa, a position she held until 2008. Since then Jenny has continued to work as a consultant winemaker.

**Words of advice.** Jenny sees cellar work as crucial. In addition, she emphasized that she could not do what she does without the support of her husband. He fully participated in the rearing of their three children, now all young adults, and equally shares in managing their home life.

**Wines crafted by Jenny.** Jenny's wines have received numerous awards, and the wineries for which she consults have produced some of New Zealand's finest red wines. We met Jenny at [William Murdoch Winery](#), where she is the consultant winemaker. Jenny also makes wines for [Sacred Hill](#), [Unison Vineyard](#), and [Squawking Magpie](#).

Experiencing Jenny as the consummate *teacher* of wine tasting and wine appreciation was one of many highlights of our time together. She surprised us with the opportunity to taste four excellent 2014 Syrahs she had crafted. The vineyards producing these Syrahs are located in different parts of the Gimblett Gravels wine-growing district. Thus, the winemaker was the "constant" across the four wines, and the terroir was the "variable."

After learning more about the terroir from Jenny, our task was to identify how terroir made a difference in what we tasted. A major factor in this is a vineyard's location relative to Roys Hill, a promontory in the area that diverts chilly westerly winds. William Murdoch, for example, has the coolest of the four vineyards, and this produces the intense flavor and concentration of its Syrah. We returned home with a bottle of the *William Murdoch 2010 Syrah*, a gift from Jenny.

Jenny explained that in crafting wines, both architecture and crescendo are needed.

"Wine has to have an attack—to say something immediately but also has to keep talking to you, move to the mid-palette for flavors to develop, and then finish. Wine needs to do gymnastics on your palette."

And her luscious Syrahs did exactly that.

Jenny is also creating her own label, Jenny Dobson Wines. One wine currently in small production is crafted from the relatively unknown white Italian wine grape, Fiano. We were allowed to have a taste, and its apple, honeysuckle, and citric aromas were wonderful.

## Lauren Swift

*“I love solving problems and encountering new challenges.”*



**Lauren Swift**

**Lauren Swift**, the winemaker at [Ash Ridge Wines](#), is a rising star in the wine industry. She is energetic and forward thinking, and totally enchanted by wine. Our conversation took place in the winery’s cellar door that features patio seating overlooking grapevines and olive trees.

Lauren grew up in Marlborough, south of Blenheim on the South Island. She remembers always working hard, first in the family’s apple orchard, and then after it was ripped out and replanted with grapes, in the new vineyards. Working in the vineyards coupled with attending weekly international food events with “WWOOFers” (aka Willing Workers On Organic Farms) from other countries, inspired Lauren to take a gap year in Great Britain to work with other 18-year-olds with a farming background, and she had a great time.

“I returned with no plans but I knew I hated working in vineyards.” As fate would have it, her mother found her a well-paying job in a vineyard in Blenheim. The vineyard was French-owned, and the owners “devoted time and effort to

education.” Lauren found much to her surprise that she loved the work! The next year she decided to study winemaking at The Eastern Institute of Technology (EIT) in Hawke’s Bay. Her extensive vineyard experience gave Lauren a good grounding for her degree and made her competitive for part-time work pruning vineyards, which provided financial support while going to school.

There were 30 students in Lauren’s entering class, but only 10 graduated three years later with their Bachelor of Wine Science and Diploma of Wine Marketing. Of the 10, four were women, including Lauren and her dear friend **Sophie Harris**, whom we also had the pleasure of meeting.

**Sophie Harris** also works in Hawke’s Bay and is an assistant winemaker at [Rod McDonald Wines](#). She is the only woman working fulltime in the cellar. A top student while at EIT, Sophie was awarded the Bragato Exchange Scholarship to study viticulture and winemaking in Italy. She has also worked harvests in South Africa and California. Lauren noted that Sophie is known for her wine intuition and technical knowledge. Sophie, however,

is quite modest about her knowledge and accomplishments. When we asked about the winemakers she most admired, Sophie said “those who make great wines, are humble, and are willing to share.”

After graduating in 2012, Lauren accepted a contract position with Chris Wilcock, the proprietor of Ash Ridge Winery, a relatively new family winery located in the Bridge Pa Triangle Wine District of Hawke’s Bay. A few months later, she was appointed the assistant winemaker; she was only 23 at the time. Lauren worked offsite at a local winery to craft the 2013 vintage Ash Ridge wines. The *Merlot* Lauren crafted just three months after graduating won a trophy at the Hawke’s Bay show!

Lauren was involved in the design of Ash Ridge’s new winemaking facility, and decided to travel to Sonoma “to work with a Kiwi guy” to learn more about running a winery. Returning in December, she took over as chief winemaker. The winery’s first vintage was in 2014, the same year in which it was awarded the Winery of the Year award at the Hawke’s Bay show.

Always looking for a challenge, Lauren entered and won the Hawkes’s Bay Young Winemakers competition in 2015. She went on to the National competition, which involved three days of intense testing on all aspects of winemaking, and again was the winner, which led to her being named New Zealand’s Young Winemaker of the Year. This hard-won honor has put Lauren on the national stage of winemaking. For example, she was selected along with Elaine Chukan Brown, the renowned wine writer, to judge a recent international wine competition.



Lauren has been at Ash Ridge Winery for five years now and could not be happier. She has a long-time commitment to Ash Ridge and hopes some day to become both the Chief Winemaker and General Manager of the winery.

**Ash Ridge Wines.** Lauren crafts her award-winning wines from several estate-grown varietals, including Chardonnay, Merlot, Pinot Gris, and Syrah. The current production is around 8,000 cases a year. Her wines have received accolades in international and national wine competitions and high ratings from wine critics.

We concluded our informative and enjoyable visit by tasting the *Vintner’s Reserve Chardonnay* and *Vintner’s Reserve Syrah*, and being red wine lovers, came home with a bottle of the 2015 *Ash Ridge Vintner’s Reserve Syrah*, a luscious wine with layers of blackberry and boysenberry fruit and a wonderful finish.

## Kate Radburnd

*“The best experience is seeing your wine through from first to end”*



**Kate Radburnd**

The renowned **Kate Radburnd** of **Radburnd Wines Ltd** was in the process of a major career change when we met her for lunch in Hastings. We had heard rumors that something was afoot but nothing more than that. Her new adventure was central to our conversation. First, though, let's start at the beginning.

**Path to winemaker.** Kate and her three siblings grew up in Adelaide, Australia, in a family that enjoyed drinking good wine and engaging in lively discussions about wine. Her mother was a biochemist and her father an architect, and both encouraged her interest in science and the complexities of wine, an interest that led her to study science and then oenology at nearby Roseworthy College. She completed a Bachelor in Applied Science (Oenology) in 1983, the only woman in her graduating class.

From there, Kate describes herself as “incredibly lucky” (we would add, “modest”). After graduating, she successfully competed for an assistant winemaker position at Vidal, one of Hawke's Bay's oldest wineries. She was 21 at the time. At Vidal, she had “the amazing opportunity to work with and be mentored by Sir George Fistonich, the godfather of New Zealand's wine

industry.” She loved her work there, was promoted to lead winemaker within three years, and stayed on in that role for another four years, during which time she produced a number of award-winning wines.

In 1991, Chris Pask, the first person to plant vines in the Gimblett Gravels district, offered Kate an opportunity to work with him at his winery. Kate was interested, professionally and personally. “He needed someone to drive the winemaking and marketing,” responsibilities that were a good fit with her skills and interests. Kate and her spouse Simon were also thinking about starting a family, so working at a small winery with its own fruit was attractive for that reason. She joined Pask as Head Winemaker in 1991, becoming a Director in 1992, co-owner in 1993, and Managing Director in 1999.

At Pask, Kate crafted an impressive array of distinguished wines that included the Kate Radburnd series and the Declaration series. The Kate Radburnd's 1998 Pask Reserve Merlot was particularly outstanding, and helped establish New Zealand's reputation for this varietal when it

was awarded the Bordeaux trophy at the International Wine Challenge in 2000. Kate also championed sustainability; Pask was awarded the trophy for sustainability at the International Wine Challenge in 2014.

After 26 years there, Kate left Pask in 2016. It was time to write her own third chapter—Vidal and Pask being the first two.

At lunch, Kate shared some details about her exciting next chapter. Her business partners are in place, brand names are being test marketed, an unoccupied winery has been located in Bay View, and sources for most of her fruit are identified.

Her first wines will become available in mid-2019, likely Syrah, Chardonnay, a Merlot blend, and some Pinot Noir. And her daughter, who is just completing her viticulture and oenology degree at Adelaide, may join her at the winery sometime in the future.



**Sunrise over Hawke's Bay**

**Leadership.** Kate sees leadership in the wine industry as vitally important, and that sense of importance fuels her involvement. She is the recipient of two prestigious awards recognizing her outstanding contribution to the New Zealand wine industry. The first was the Sir George Fistonich Medal in 2010. In 2015, she was the first woman winemaker to be inducted as a Fellow of New Zealand Winegrowers.

Early on Kate had recognized the importance of sustainable winegrowing and wine excellence, and the leadership required to create the conditions for both to thrive. She has been a board member of New Zealand Winegrowers for a number of years, and was the only woman on the board for the first 14 years that she served. (Currently there are two women on the 12-member board).

Kate has been a senior wine judge at the Air New Zealand Wine Awards and is Chair of Judges of the Royal Easter Show Wine Awards, New Zealand's oldest wine competition. She has been involved in education through the Eastern Institute of Technology (EIT), where she was a council member for 12 years. EIT has viticulture and winemaking as flagship degrees.

We look forward to following Kate's third chapter and to enjoying her wines when they became available next year!

## Julianne Brogden

*“A science background is hugely important as is learning to pick yourself up.”*



**Julianne Brogden**

Highly talented, **Julianne Brogden**, the owner and winemaker of Collaboration Wines, is a warm, generous person who cares deeply about her craft. She grew up in Hawke’s Bay in a New Zealand family that was supportive of her interests in science, horticulture, and the arts. In 1997, at the age of 17, Julianne enrolled in a Bachelor of Wine Science, Winemaking and Viticulture program at EIT, offered in conjunction with Charles Sturt University. It was at this point that Julianne was introduced to Pask Winery and Kate Radburnd, its winemaker. She was awarded a scholarship funded by Pask that included the opportunity to work a vintage. The next year she was invited to work at Pask’s cellar door.

After completing her degree in 1999, Julianne worked a vintage at Vidal Winery doing her first cellar work. In recalling this experience, she noted that she “hated being a ‘girl’ in the cellar” and decided to “suck it up and toughen up.” Athletic when growing up, she started lifting weights and ignoring non-supportive comments. A young man with whom she worked at Vidal encouraged her to get further experience in

California. He put her in contact with a Kiwi who was the assistant winemaker at Havens Wine Cellars in Napa, and off she went to work a vintage there, mostly in the cellar, and loved it: “It was a peak experience.”

And thus began her many years working in California. With her J-1 visa in hand, she worked another harvest with Havens Wine Cellars and then accepted an enologist position at Clos Pegase in Calistoga, a position she held for three and a half years. “I did everything! I was the only woman on the team, and it worked great.” She moved on to an assistant winemaking position at Lewis Cellars, a small family winery in Napa, and again totally immersed herself in that experience.

After nearly seven years away, it was time to return to come home to Hawke’s Bay, and to establish her own brand, which she called [Collaboration Wines](#). While developing the Collaboration Wines portfolio, which released its first wine in 2010, Julianne also worked as a winemaker for Pask, the Hawke’s Bay winery she knew from her university days.

**Words of advice.** “Essential are travel in other wine regions, a science background, work in the cellar and the laboratory, going to school, and learning all you can wherever you are.”

**Collaboration Wines.** Collaboration Wines does not have a cellar door, so Julianne graciously invited us to meet late afternoon at her home in Hastings. It turned out to be a particularly momentous day, as Julianne had recently resigned from her full-time winemaking position to focus solely on Collaboration Wines—the day we visited was her last day in that position.

Julianne literally works “in collaboration” with growers: the grapes for her wines come from select Hawke’s Bay vineyard sites that she believes reflect the unique terroir of its various wine regions. She has been using the winemaking equipment at Pask, but she soon will be sharing the Bay View facility with Kate Radburnd.

Collaboration Wines offered its first wine, *Argent Cabernet Sauvignon*, in 2010. Another varietal or blend has been added each year: in 2011, *Aurulent Chardonnay*, in 2012, *Impression Red*, a Bordeaux blend, and in 2013, *Ceresia Merlot/Cabernet Franc*. The current production is 1500 cases. Julianne also crafts *Poet Pinot Gris* from fruit she sources from the vineyards of Lime Rock Wines and markets under the [Bohemian](#) label. We tasted the 2017 *Poet Pinot Gris*, and it was excellent, crisp, fruity, and aromatic.

Julianne’s wines consistently receive excellent reviews: 4 or 5 stars (out of 5) in the annual Buyers Guide to New Zealand Wine, and ratings in the 90s by the *Wine Advocate*. Julianne shared several of her wines with us, and we are in total agreement with the wine critics! Her 2013 *Argent Cabernet Sauvignon*, our favorite being red wine lovers, was just wonderful, complex yet elegant.

Julianne commissions an artist she met in California to design her labels, and as demonstrated in the photo, the results are both lovely and eye-catching.

Her partner, Richard Painter, the winemaker for Te Awa, a small winery now under the umbrella of the Villa Maria family of wineries, joined us late in the conversation and shared some of his perspectives about the wine industry as well. We could not have asked for a better final day of our time in Hawke’s Bay.



## The Land

Terroir is of key importance to the winemakers—and the wines—of Hawke’s Bay. Thus we include a brief overview of its unique terroir to supplement what was noted earlier.

The soils of Hawke’s Bay are combinations of a hard sandstone called greywacke, clay, limestone, and alluvial deposits of sand and gravel. Variations in the composition of these soils are an important component defining the terroir of the fruit being produced.



Of particular interest to us in this regard was the presence of Gimblett Gravels underlying some of the vineyards of wineries we visited in the Hawke’s Bay region. These gravels are the result of a major flood in 1867 that changed the course of the Ngaruroro River, leaving the previous riverbed and its trove of gravel behind. The effect of the stony soil is to lower fertility and the water table, and to serve as a heat store that moderates the cool breezes originating from the Bay. A “*meso*-climate” results.

We also visited wineries whose vineyards are situated in limestone-dominated soils. Here, establishing new vineyards requires the use of specialized equipment to allow for planting.



## A Toast to Hawke’s Bay and its Inspiring and Iconic Women Winemakers

Similar to California, Hawke’s Bay is located in a country where the wine industry is quite young, where women are achieving increased economic and political equality, and where conventional gender-related attitudes are slowly changing. In both wine regions, the current percentage of lead women winemakers is only about 10%, but increasing numbers of women are entering the field at all levels.

In New Zealand, the “Women in Wine” Initiative of New Zealand Winegrowers, the country’s national organization for grape growers and wineries, holds particular promise and is receiving much attention. In creating the initiative, the organization’s Board recognized the importance of promoting and facilitating the participation of women in the industry. The women winemakers with whom we met all mentioned this important initiative. They noted, “women want to be winemakers, not women winemakers. That is the goal.”

We believe that sharing the inspiring stories of these successful women winemakers in Hawke's Bay and in the other wine regions we have studied further facilitates the process of change that clearly is underway.

Let us toast these six inspiring and iconic women and wish them well! Without exception, they love what they do, care deeply about preserving the land, and see their work as a way to elaborate authentic wines that reflect the terroir of the vineyard from which the fruit is derived.



1 *Author Bios*: Lucia Albino Gilbert, PhD, and John C. (Jack) Gilbert, PhD, both Professors Emeriti, have had long and distinguished careers at The University of Texas at Austin and Santa Clara University and are widely published in their respective fields. Their research on facilitating women's career success in male-dominated scientific fields such as winemaking combines Lucia's academic field of Psychology and John's academic field of Organic Chemistry. They can be reached at [lgilbert@scu.edu](mailto:lgilbert@scu.edu). Their research website is [www.womenwinemakers.com](http://www.womenwinemakers.com).

2 Material for this article came from our conversations with the winemakers, their winery websites, and the books, *100 Great New Zealand Wineries* by Douglas Renall (2017), published by David Bateman Ltd, and *Passion, Pinot & Savvy* by Kirsten Rodsgaard-Mathiesen (2014), Mad Frog Productions.

3 We identified Hawkes Bay winemakers from a winery listing provided by Hawkes Bay Wine ([http://hawkesbaywine.co.nz/wineries/?cat\\_id=1&view=listcats](http://hawkesbaywine.co.nz/wineries/?cat_id=1&view=listcats)) and then checking winery websites.

4 Mark Sweets used this term in his book *Wine Stories from Hawke's Bay* (2017).