

# SEIFRIED

New Zealand is known today around the world for its Sauvignon Blanc, and has been growing that grape for nearly half as long as Sancerre in France's Loire. The Sauvignons of Marlborough – the region of New Zealand's vineyards – have been a modern market sensation. But the good stuff isn't limited to Sauvignon or to Marlborough, as the wines of New Zealand pioneer Hermann Seifried deliciously demonstrate.

Hermann Seifried arrived in New Zealand in 1970 from his native Austria by way of South Africa. A few years later he established the first vineyards in Nelson, at the northern tip of New Zealand's South Island, then a beach tourist, tobacco growing, and hippy town with plenty of sunshine, coastal breezes, ancient bedrock and gravel drainage, all admirably suited to the propagation of wine. Not that this was recognized overnight. Hermann and wife Agnes couldn't get the local banks to loan them capital. "We thought," says Hermann, it can only go one of two ways. Either we will be bankrupt, or we will succeed." And succeed they did, not only in establishing their name as a benchmark for vinous quality and value, but the name of Nelson as well.

In the mid eighties, there were still fewer than a hundred acres of vines in this region, and Michael Cooper in his groundbreaking "The Wines and Vineyards of New Zealand" predicted that "Nelson is unlikely to emerge as a major district for wine." Today, following in the vision and footsteps of Hermann Seifried, there are twenty-seven other growers and the region is New Zealand's fourth largest.

Seifried's vineyards are divided between the Moutere Hills, the Waimea coastal plans, and the foothills



of the Richmond ranges, each of these sub-regions that are beginning to establish their own viticultural reputations. All of the wines from this five-person family winery, however - for the sake both of blending and of simplicity in labeling - are bottled under one regional name: Nelson.

Total acreage: 430 hectares

Varieties: details below.

Viticultural and winemaking details: See below.

## Sauvignon Blanc

*This mouthful of herb-tinged pineapple and passion fruit originates in Seifried's Rabbit Island vineyards, on a wide river flat a mile from the ocean that was "enriched" by the indigenous Māori with sand, Gravel, and ash from burnt scrub. In some years Redwoods Valley fruit is incorporated into this bottling.*

## Riesling

*Seifried's Brightwater vineyard was planted in 1999, but these stony, dry, nutrient-poor soils will age a poor vine prematurely – just the thing for quality wine! One lot of Riesling (from Redwoods Vineyard) was fermented to dryness and another from Brightwater arrested in its fermentation. The two were then married for a happily-ever-after on a bed of pit fruits, citrus and flowers.*

## Riesling "Sweet Agnes"

*Grapes from Brightwater were pressed frozen for a rich riot of honey-drenched and electrifyingly lively citrus and pit fruits.*

## Malbec – Merlot – Cabernet

*The clay and gravel mix in Seifried's Redwoods Valley vineyard is more than a little reminiscent of southwest France, so here's a unique variation on that region's classic grapes very New Zealand in its outgoing personality.*

## Pinot Noir

*From Seifried's Rabbit Island vineyards (see above), this variation on the classic red grape of Burgundy, gently extracted by means of hand punch-downs and matured just under a year in seasoned barrels, is fragrant, warm and mouth filling.*