

Trinity Hill Announces a new Partner

The owners of Trinity Hill, the much-lauded Hawkes Bay winery, announced today they have formed a new partnership with Charles Banks, the US winery owner.

Under the umbrella of his wine business, Terroir Selections, Banks owns and distributes some of California's highest profile wineries including Mayacamas, California's oldest Cabernet producer, Qupé, regularly named as America's top Syrah maker, and Sandi, a new cult Chardonnay maker. He also owns leading South African winery Mulderbosch.

In Hawkes Bay for Trinity Hill's annual Friends and Family Festival, Banks said how delighted he was to become a partner in Trinity Hill, not just because of his belief in the wines, but also his long-term affection for New Zealand.

"I fell in love with New Zealand on my first visit in 2001 when I was waylaid by the 9/11 terrorist activity. The hospitality and warmth extended during those difficult days away from my family made me a friend of New Zealand for life.

"I have been hugely impressed by the strides the New Zealand wine industry has made in the last 12 years and I feel the future is very bright. Trinity Hill is in a terrific position to prosper having consistently delivered high quality wines across its range. We intend to invest the necessary capital to allow the continued improvement in quality."

Trinity Hill's Chairman and co-founder Robyn Wilson said: "We are enormously excited, especially to be re-entering the US premium wine market, after a five-year absence, and in the company of the superstar wineries Charles has in his stable. Charles will be able to get our flagship wines the Homage and The Gimblett into the places and on to the lists they deserve to be."

Mrs Wilson, a London based Kiwi who owns London's Bleeding Heart Restaurant Group added, "Not only do we now have the best American distributor a New Zealand winery could wish for, but Charles decision to join us as a partner will allow us to develop in areas we would not have been able to achieve on our own."

John Hancock, Trinity Hill's co-founder and its President, said he and Chief Winemaker Warren Gibson were very excited by Charles' plans to build a new boutique premium winery specifically for the top- end reds coming off the company's 200 acres of vineyards, 120 of them in the much sought after Gimblett Gravels sub-region.

"We have always known that the Gravels can produce wines to match the best that Europe and the US have to offer - now we will have a state of the art facility to make them. And Charles with his extensive sales network across the US, Canada, Europe and Scandinavia has the ability to distribute them for us."

Michael Henley Trinity's CEO added that not only would the partnership with Charles and Terroir be good for Trinity Hill but it would be a real boost for Hawkes Bay's image

as a fine wine producing region as well providing the region with continuing employment opportunities: " By investing in Trinity Hill, Charles and Terroir are ensuring the long term viability of what is one of Hawke's Bay's and New Zealand's most loved wine labels."

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