



Balvonie New Zealand produces Marlborough's first Prosecco

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Marlborough wine producer and grape grower, Balvonie New Zealand, has released Marlborough's first Prosecco from Glera grapes planted in the Rapaura sub-region.

The 2023 Balvonie Prosecco has been a three-year project for owners Ben and Helen McLauchlan, who first fell in love with Prosecco while living in the UK. The well-loved wine is made from a little-known grape called Glera, widely planted in Italy, but largely unknown in New Zealand.

"Global Prosecco sales have boomed in the last decade. Following a year of research, we were confident that the Glera vine would grow well here in Marlborough. We wanted to try something different, so we gave it a nudge," says Ben McLauchlan.

The deep fertile soil of the Balvonie vineyard has proven to be the ideal location for growing Glera, producing naturally large bunches of grapes in perfect health.

"Glera has a loose architecture, and we have seen no disease. It has a long growing season, with an early bud burst and harvest around the same time as Sauvignon Blanc," says Ben.

The Glera grapes used in the Balvonie Prosecco come from vine cuttings imported from Italy, then propagated by Ormond Nurseries in Marlborough.

"After watching the global growth in Prosecco sales, we wanted to explore its potential for the New Zealand wine industry. I believe Glera is well suited to our growing conditions, the long, cool ripening period allows full flavour development, and the vine is vigorous, producing a good crop load," says Marcus Wickham, Ormond Nurseries General Manager.

Glera grapes for the Balvonie Prosecco are hand harvested, and crafted into a still wine in tank, then bottled for a second fermentation, using the Méthode Traditionnelle technique, renowned for producing persistent and elegant bubbles.

"Glera has a beautiful freshness, with bright citrus and green apple flavours. It is a naturally lower alcohol alternative to many sparkling wines," says Ben.

The name Balvonie is steeped in history. The McLauchlan family settled in Marlborough back in 1859, with Ben's grandfather establishing his own farm in 1935, naming it Balvonie as a nod to his Scottish heritage. That parcel of land has been extended over the years and, today, Balvonie New Zealand is an established vineyard and a proud partner with First Light Foods to finish grass fed Wagyu beef.

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About Balvonie New Zealand

Balvonie is Scottish for 'Farm in the Foothills.' Home now to the third generation of the McLauchlan Clan, sustainability and guardianship of the land is at the core of every farming and winemaking decision.

www.balvonie.nz