

We found both great wine and great food at Herzog Estate Winery. (www.herzog.co.nz) With Chef Michael Wibbeke heading the culinary team, their restaurant ranks among the top five in New Zealand. Our appetizer of cold smoked salmon mousse with fennel herb and asparagus salad with salmon roe paired with Herzog's 2005 Feather White, actually a bright, crisp Rosé of Pinot Noir, a raspberry-strawberry counterpoint to the salt and smoke of the salmon.

For our main course, we enjoyed braised lamb shoulder with semolina gnocchi and bean cassoulet with paprika and rich gravy. The 2000 Spirit of Marlborough, a complex, full-bodied blend of Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Malbec, ideally matched this savory dish. Our dessert, a chocolate tart with rhubarb

ragout, strawberry sorbet, and orange biscuit, was happily accompanied by a velvety sweet 2005 Botrytis Chardonnay. Herzog also produces Viognier, Pinot Gris, Pinot Noir, and Montepulciano.

Note: Because "Herzog" is already a U.S. brand name, New Zealand Herzog wines sold here may be labeled "Hanz," named for the winery's owner/winemaker.