



## More Than Just a Wine

A typical healthy New Zealand upbringing of beaches, surfing and overseas adventures lead a remarkably talented couple to realise a dream most can only aspire to. Corey and Megan Hall have much to celebrate in their lives, one of them being the success of their winemaking business, The Studio Wine Company, from which they produce their labels Gem, and more recently, Harwood Hall.

Based in West Auckland, an area steeped in winemaking history, Corey and Megan are leading the way in developing cutting-edge wine styles. Free from the previous stress of managing a large commercial winery, winemaker Corey is able to concentrate on making exceptional boutique wines. His wines truly are handmade as he nurtures the flavours, nuances and characteristics of the grapes he has personally selected from around New Zealand.

Both national and international relationships have become one of Corey's priorities. Working with top restaurateurs has helped fuel his enthusiasm for pushing wine styles to an unprecedented level. He has strived to see his wines sold where the complexities of his boundary-pushing styles may be fully appreciated. This has seen Gem, the company's signature range, gain international recognition in several London restaurants such as Gordon Ramsay Royal Hospital Road (three Michelin stars) and Sketch (one Michelin star), to name but a few. Locally, consistently highly acclaimed restaurants are keen to work with Corey and are continually excited by the results he is achieving with his wines.

Another key aim is to produce wines that complement food, bringing a harmony of flavours to the palette. "I want my wines to be part of life as opposed to just a drink," says Corey. As the list of restaurants serving his wines continues



to grow, more and more diners are happily experiencing this concept.

Recognising the need to add a second tier to their range, Harwood Hall, has gone into production. This is the result of a 50/50 collaboration with former work colleague, Digger Hennessy and his wife, Debra. Equally experienced, Digger was the chief winemaker at Mount Riley wines. This range delivers a well-priced, commercial high-end wine. Again, Corey's passion and fervent gusto for wines created from small quantity of quality fruit has been rewarded by outstanding results.

As with Gem, Meg spelt in reverse; Harwood also carries a personal touch, as it was Debra's family name. It is obvious family resonates strongly with the Halls. Their two daughters, Pepper and Minine are a constant source of inspiration and indeed it was the arrival of Pepper that pushed them into starting their own business.

Corey has a resumé that reads like a wine label itself: travels throughout top wine producing areas of Australia, California and France, picking up a winemaking degree from the University of Adelaide, winning countless awards and working for one of the most well known New Zealand. With a scarcity of such experienced winemakers in New Zealand, their expert knowledge of growing, making, bottling, distributing and selling of wine is an asset in itself. Their enthusiasm to impart their expertise to others and to guide New Zealand wines into the future is boundless.

This exciting future, including expansion of existing markets and development of new relationships, is now within the couple's sights. They plan to continue to make dents in the UK and Australian markets and to develop trade partnerships in the United States and Canada. The local market will also continue to expand as the brand gains recognition. The company's wines are available at selected restaurants and specialist wine merchants.

Going by their past achievements, now part of New Zealand's wine history, it seems a surety that the Halls are set to bring a completely new dimension to the way we drink our wines. ●

[www.gemwine.co.nz](http://www.gemwine.co.nz)

