

**LEADING NEW ZEALAND RED WINE PRODUCERS LAUNCH APPELLATION
GIMBLETT GRAVELS BELIEVED TO BE FIRST IN NEW WORLD**

A group of New Zealand wineries and winegrowers today launched Gimblett Gravels as their own appellation. They have combined the French concept of terroir with modern day thinking to define, protect and market their wine. In what they believe is a first for winegrowers in the New World – wine growing countries outside Europe – Gimblett Gravels is basing the ultimate designation of their district according to a tightly specified soil type.

Gimblett Gravels represents 34 wineries and winegrowers in the premium winegrowing area of Hawke's Bay, on the eastern side of New Zealand's North Island. Gimblett Gravels chairman Steve Smith, a Master of Wine, said he believed this was the first winegrowing appellation in the New World ultimately defined by soil type.

"We are convinced that our very special gravelly soils and unique climatic conditions – together with the expertise of our winemakers – are key elements to producing high quality wines in the Gimblett Gravels district, Mr Smith said. The district, which includes the internationally acclaimed Gimblett Road, has been building a reputation for producing high quality red wines from Bordeaux red varieties and Syrah. The Gimblett Gravels appellations, covering 800ha, with 65 per cent in producing vineyards, is strictly determined by the gravelly soils laid down by the old Ngaruroro River, which were exposed after a huge flood in the 1870's. "Initially, we were driven by a desire to identify ourselves collectively because we are proud of what Mother Nature has given us. We also want to protect the integrity of our wines using a scientific approach – without compromise or politics, Mr Smith said.

A specialist viticulturalist, he has studied the winegrowing climates of the world's fine wine regions, and his conclusions provide the technical evidence to support the Gimblett Gravels theory. His study shows the Gimblett Gravels district is up to three degrees Celsius warmer during the day in summer and autumn, compared with most other areas in Hawke's Bay. "The evenings are also warmer because of thermal conductivity in the stony soils. "This extra summer and autumn heat and the contribution from our soils puts the terroir of Gimblett Gravels alongside some of the world's famous producers of red wine from the Bordeaux varieties," he said. "We have the potential and our vineyards are young. It's now up to us to make the most of it as our vineyards mature." Under the Gimblett Gravels platform, only vineyards in the geographical area with 95% of their land in the gravelly soils are eligible to become members. Wines bearing the Gimblett Gravels brand must be 95% from the district. Random internal audits will be undertaken to protect the Gimblett Gravels integrity, Mr Smith said.

Wines produced in the Gimblett Gravels district target the ultra-premium market in New Zealand and markets in the United Kingdom, Europe, the United States, Australia, Japan, and Canada. The Gimblett Gravels logo will begin appearing on bottles with members' brands on New Zealand shelves within the next few weeks, and the international market in the first half of the year.

Steve Smith, MW – Chairman

This media statement has been prepared by Hill and Knowlton
New Zealand Limited on behalf of Gimblett Gravels.

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WINERIES PRODUCING DESIGNATED WINES**WINERY**

Babich Wines
CJ Pask
CrossRoads
Delegat's Wine Estate
Esk Valley Estate
Firstland Vineyards
Hatton Estate
Kingsley Estate
Matariki Wines
Mills Reef Winery
Mission Estate Winery
Newton Forrest Estate
Ngatarawa Wines
Stoncroft
Te Awa Farm Winery
Thornbury Wines
Trinity Hill
Unison
Vidal Estate
Villa Maria Estate
Woodlands Partnership

RED WINE BRANDS

Irongate and Patriarch
Gimblett Road and Reserve Gimblett Road
Syrah
Winemakers Hawke's Bay Reserve
Reserve Blend
Reserve
Gimblett Road
Gimblett Road
Anthology, Quintology, Varietals
Elspeth Varietals and Blends
Reserve Gimblett Road
Cornerstone

Syrah and Ruhanui
Longlands and Boundary

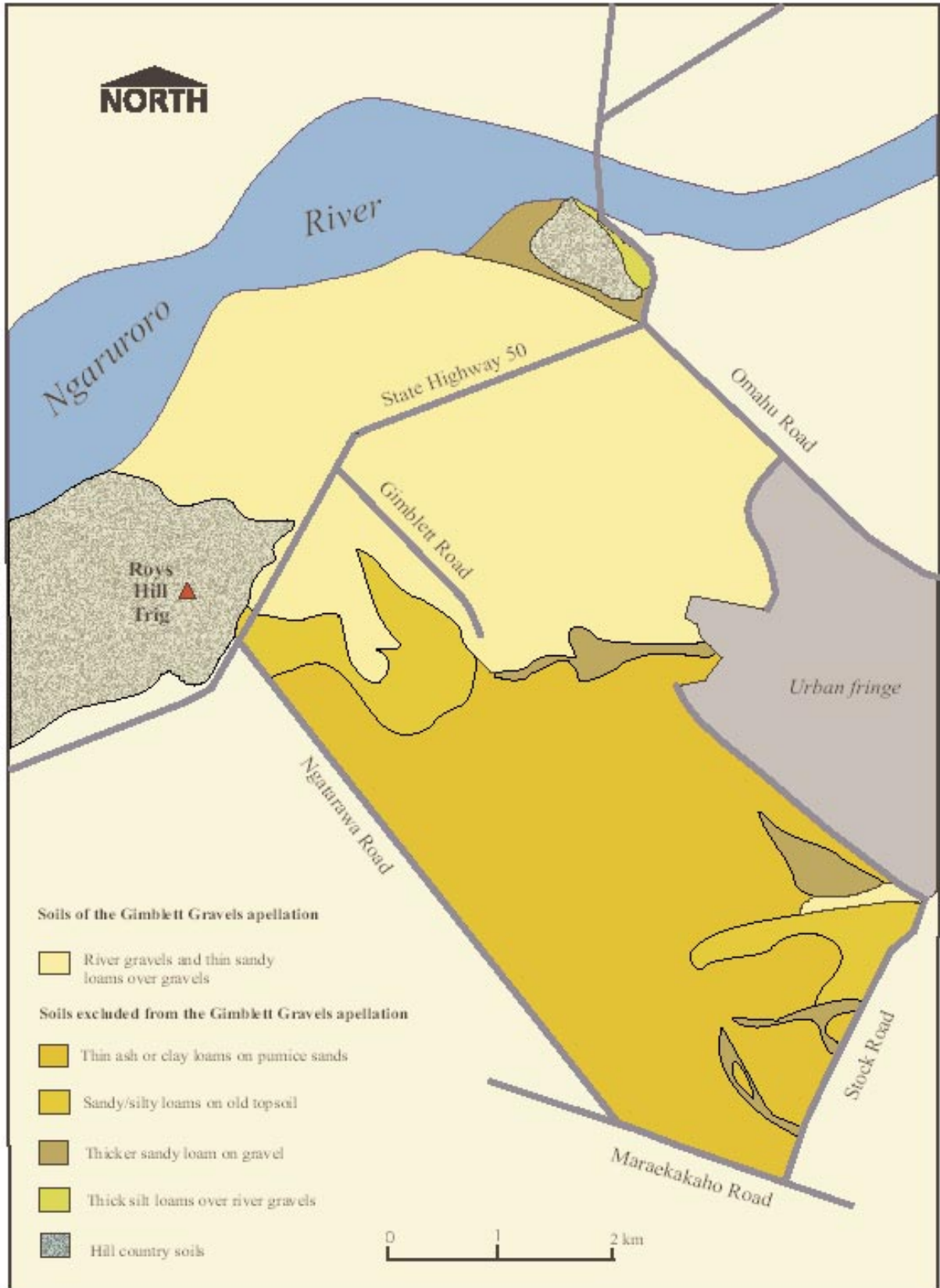
Gimblett Road and Gimblett Gravels
Unison and Unison Selection
Reserve Varietals and Blends
Reserve Varietals and Blends
Squawking Magpie

**WINERIES NOT YET PRODUCING GIMBLETT GRAVELS WINES
AND PRIVATE GROWERS**

Back Partnership
Beach House Wines
Blake Family Trust
Craggy Range Winery
Fernhill Holdings
Gimblett Road Grapes Ltd
Goldwater Estates
New K Trust
Riverstone Vineyards
Roys Hill Vineyard
Sacred Hill Wines
Stockbridge Vineyards
Terra Vitae Vineyards
Wicken Partnership
Gimblett Gravels Vineyard



Location map - Gimblett Gravels Winegrowing District



The Gimblett Gravels Winegrowing District

Soil distribution after E. Griffiths 1997