



Asia Emerges as New Market for Kiwi Wine Industry

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Kiwi wine lovers are fast developing a taste for Asian wines. As a result a new market is emerging for New Zealand winemakers.

Asia is the fastest growing wine market in the world and following recent economic slump New Zealand winemakers are desperately seeking to be a part of it.

In 2008 the continent consumed 1.3 billion bottles of wine, and prediction was that it would grow by 25% over the following five years.

New Zealand exports more than \$50 million worth of wine to Asia each year, which is five times more than what it was a decade ago.

Jeannie Cho-Lee, wine writer and critic from Hong-Kong, said wine has quickly become more popular in Asia. "It's very common now to see wine in your average family style Chinese restaurant ... whereas even just a decade ago, it was hard to find," she said.

Winemaker, Kate Radburn, said the new market has opened up plenty of business opportunities for New Zealand vineyards.

"We have a population base that I think we can't even begin to comprehend, and absolutely unlimited opportunities if we get the relationships right."

Cho-Lee said while demand for wine in Asia is on the rise, Kiwi winemakers need to be aware of business cultural differences to make the most of opportunities.

So she is in New Zealand to tell kiwi winemakers how to make the 'make it' in the Asia wine market.

Nigel Avery from Sileni Estate said business deals take longer in Asia than in New Zealand.

"You know New Zealand, a good old shake of the hand, back of an envelope and we've done a deal. Over there it takes a bit longer, and Taiwan, Japan, Korea, China, they've all got their own cultures within that as well," he said.