

KUMEU RIVER	2007	PINOT GRIS	AUCKLAND	(\$22.00)	WHITE	90
KUMEU RIVER	2006	VILLAGE CHARDONNAY	AUCKLAND	(\$19.00)	WHITE	85
KUMEU RIVER	2006	ESTATE CHARDONNAY	AUCKLAND	(\$33.00)	WHITE	90
KUMEU RIVER	2005	CHARDONNAY	AUCKLAND	(\$33.00)	WHITE	89
KUMEU RIVER	2004	CHARDONNAY	AUCKLAND	(\$33.00)	WHITE	88
KUMEU RIVER	2003	CHARDONNAY	AUCKLAND	(not available)	WHITE	90
KUMEU RIVER	2002	CHARDONNAY	AUCKLAND	(not available)	WHITE	89
KUMEU RIVER	2006	CODDINGTON CHARDONNAY	AUCKLAND	(\$40.00)	WHITE	93
KUMEU RIVER	2006	HUNTING HILL CHARDONNAY	AUCKLAND	(\$40.00)	WHITE	91
KUMEU RIVER	2006	MATE'S VINEYARD CHARDONNAY	AUCKLAND	(\$45.00)	WHITE	95
KUMEU RIVER	2005	MATE'S VINEYARD CHARDONNAY	AUCKLAND	(\$43.00)	WHITE	90
KUMEU RIVER	2004	MATE'S VINEYARD CHARDONNAY	AUCKLAND	(\$43.00)	WHITE	91
KUMEU RIVER	2003	MATE'S VINEYARD CHARDONNAY	AUCKLAND	(not available)	WHITE	91
KUMEU RIVER	2002	MATE'S VINEYARD CHARDONNAY	AUCKLAND	(not available)	WHITE	89

Kumeu River and Michael Brajkovich MW have both become synonymous with New Zealand's finest Chardonnay from just outside Auckland. For over two decades they have fashioned Burgundy-inspired wines (particularly Meursault) with their Mate's Vineyard Chardonnay winning accolades far and wide. In 2006 Michael is debuting two new single vineyard sites: Coddington and Hunting Hill that were hitherto blended into the "Chardonnay" blend, now renamed "Estate Chardonnay" and redesigned the label. Michael is confident that bottling the two single vineyards separately will detract nothing from the quality of the Estate Chardonnay and told me that he intends to move away from the buttery style of Chardonnay and keep the wine on their lees for longer.

The lovely **2007 Pinot Gris** has an aromatic, leesy nose inflected with white peach, guava, almond and a touch of rose petals, the palate very well-balanced and completely harmonious and natural. Sourced from batches Michael deems not up to the level of other labels, the Village 2006 Chardonnay has a fresh, apple-scented nose with a touch of kiwi fruit, sharp entry on the palate with gooseberry in the background with nice weight on the finish. The **2006 Estate Chardonnay** is sourced from ten estate parcels with a little fruit sourced from identical parcels every year. It has a lovely, Burgundian nose – very minerally with touches of limestone and not a million miles away from a Meursault. The palate is beautifully balanced with that minerally component coming through with touches of limestone and white peach on the aftertaste. Drink over 2-3 years. The **2005 Chardonnay** has Kumeu's signature Meursault-like nose with great definition with a touch of petrol developing in the glass, the palate very ripe, a little honeyed and viscous with hints of lychee towards the finish. Drink over 4-6 years. The **2004 Chardonnay** is blessed with outstanding precision on the nose with notes of limestone and white peach with hints of hazelnut, but it just lacks the tension of the ensuing vintage, whilst the frost-affected **2003 Chardonnay** is more buttery on the nose, the palate rich and concentrated with a more Riesling-style flavor profile with its petrol-tinged finish. The **2002 Chardonnay** has a more floral bouquet with touches of melted butter and candle wax, the palate now fully mature with honey, beeswax and resin (redolent of a fine Rheingau!) The outstanding **2006 Coddington Chardonnay** is a

vineyard trained on a single vertical trellis. It displays fantastic definition on the intense aromatics with crisp apple, limestone, apricot and white peach, the palate very concentrated with vibrant acidity, touches of apple and walnut and very good weight on the slightly honeyed, persistent finish. This Chardonnay should easily last more than a decade. The **2006 Hunting Hill Chardonnay** is grown on a lyre trellis: much more introverted on the nose than the Coddington but still imbued with that Meursault-like profile. The palate is very ripe, a little "warmer" than Coddington with higher alcohol (14%). It develops an entrancing glycerin-rich finish inter-cut with fresh lime and a touch of petrol on the aftertaste. This forms a superb debut. The **2006 Mate's Vineyard Chardonnay** has a different take on the vintage: earthier on the nose with hazelnut and butterscotch developing with time. This has the most elegance and harmony of the three single vineyards with just perfect acidity and harmonious, cohesive finish inflected with apricot and white peach. Very refined, this would challenge the superiority of many white Burgundy wines. Again, it should drink well between 3-10 years. To be honest, I found that the **2005 Mate's Vineyard Chardonnay** is only slightly better than the regular (now Estate) Chardonnay but has better definition and minerality on the nose with vibrant acidity on the palate, notes of lime, white peach and orange zest, finishing slightly reserved. The **2004 Mate's Vineyard Chardonnay** has an explosive nose of almond, hazelnut and acacia honey, beautifully integrated oak with that Meursault-inspired palate with great balance and verve – a wine destined to blossom over the next 3 to 4-years. The **2003 Mate's Vineyard Chardonnay** has a lifted, floral nose but it took time to unfurl from the glass, eventually revealing nuances such as lanolin, melted butter and dandelions. The palate is harmonious and concentrated although I felt it could do with a degree more acidity to lend it more tension and poise. The **2002 Mate's Vineyard Chardonnay** has a more buttery nose that Michael is keen to move away from, with notes of lime and hazelnut, though just lacking the definition that I think he has perfected in recent vintages. The palate is ripe and honeyed, again reminding me of a petroly Riesling! Just lacks a little breeding. Importer: Wilson Daniels Ltd., St Helena, CA; tel. (707) 963-9661; fax (707) 963-8566