

# SELWYN

FROM THE LAND 

SUMMER 24/25, ISSUE 20



Waikirikiri Selwyn summers are the perfect time to embrace the warmth of long days, school holidays and family gatherings. Whether you're exploring local markets, enjoying BBQ feasts, or discovering the region's hidden and not so hidden gems, Selwyn has everything you need for a fantastic summer.



## THE MERCHANT OF FLAVOUR: SELWYN'S VENISON AT ITS FINEST

James and Angela Petrie owners of Merchant of Venison are challenging people's experience of venison by producing tender and mild meat that is not only enjoyed by locals but also sought after by some of New Zealand's top restaurants and specialist butchers.

Based in Tai Tapu, the Merchant of Venison started in 1988 when James began working at Mountain River Venison Farm on the banks of the Rakaia River. Outside of his processing work, James started selling premium venison to local restaurants, supermarkets and butchers. It didn't take long for word to spread of the premium cuts and so a full-time business was born – with Angela coming on board soon after.

For most people, their only experience with venison is wild caught deer, which can have a strong gamey taste and tough texture. The secret to sweet and tender venison lies in its source. Merchant of Venison deer is raised on lush South Island pastures, incorporating sustainable farming practices and expert processing skills producing a far superior product.

Merchant of Venison offers everything from premium cuts to the ever popular and versatile minced meat. James suggests trying venison mince in your family's favourite recipes, promising it will be "the best you've had."

Merchant of Venison's roots run deep in Selwyn. Their close relationships with local farmers ensure consistent quality and their venison is even sought after in deer-rich countries like Sweden. James says, "We're fortunate to be part of a region with so many exceptional producers. It's a real credit to Selwyn."

You can find Merchant of Venison's products online, in Canterbury restaurants and in some Selwyn supermarkets.

## TWITCHING IN SELWYN: DISCOVER STUNNING BIRDLIFE

Selwyn's diverse landscapes, from wetlands to alpine lakes, offer a haven for birdwatchers and wildlife lovers. Get your binoculars, a camera, and some snacks for an inspiring birdwatching adventure.

### Te Waihora | Lake Ellesmere

A treasure for birdwatchers, Te Waihora is one of New Zealand's most important wetlands. It's home to rare species like the matuku/australasian bittern, migratory kuaka/godwits, and elegant kotuku/white herons. Visit between November and March for the best chance to spot migratory birds.

### Rakaia River

Selwyn's braided rivers support unique species, including the ngutu pare/wrybill plover, tarapiroe/black-fronted tern, and tarāpuka/black-billed gull. Watch for torea/pied oystercatchers along the riverbanks.

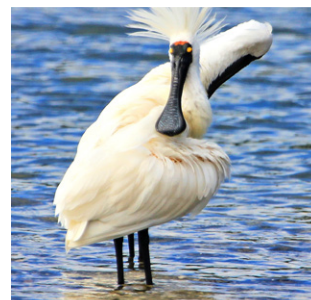
### Arthur's Pass

The forests and alpine streams of Arthur's Pass are alive with native birds like the kakaruwai/South Island robin, titipounamu/South Island rifleman, and cheeky kea. You might even spot the rare whio/blue duck.

### Moana Rua | Lake Pearson

This alpine lake is home to the pūteketeke/great crested grebe, 2023's Bird of the Year. Its waters also attract putangitangi/paradise shelducks and pāpango/scaup.

Selwyn's birdwatching spots promise breathtaking encounters with nature. Grab your gear and experience the wonder of our district's stunning wildlife.



Images: Peter Langlands



## INSTAGRAMMABLE LOCATION ROADMAN'S HUT

Step back in time at Roadman's Hut, a photogenic slice of history nestled in the mountains along State Highway 73 near Porters Pass.

Share your favourite insta shot with us.

**SHARE** @SELWYN.NZ

Wherever you find yourself in beautiful Selwyn, there is something to see that's worth capturing. From natural wonders to historical sights and even cartoon-based sculptures, Selwyn has everything you need for epic additions to your Instagram page.

For more spots visit [selwyn.nz/blogs](http://selwyn.nz/blogs)



## TRANQUIL TWO-NIGHT SUMMER ESCAPE IN WHITECLIFFS

### Day 1: Unwind and Explore

**Morning:** Begin your journey with a stop at Les Délices French Bakery in West Melton to pick up freshly baked pastries (don't miss the almond croissants!). Visit Melton Estate for a bottle of wine to enjoy later.

**Midday:** Travel to Hororata and visit The Artist In, a gallery showcasing pottery and local art. Enjoy coffee and homemade cakes at the Hororata Café & Bar before heading to your accommodation.

**Afternoon:** Arrive at Sophie's Canopy Camping and settle in. Take a refreshing dip in the Selwyn River or relax by the sunken firepit with a cup of tea.

**Evening:** Cook your favorite barbecue fare in the lean-to kitchen and spend the evening stargazing in the tranquil bush setting.

### Day 2: Adventure and Indulgence

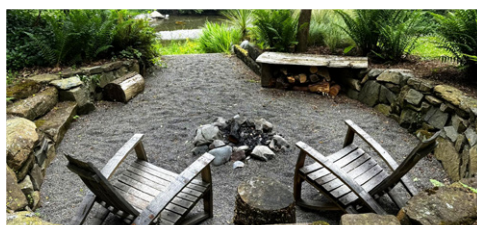
**Morning:** Start your day with a leisurely breakfast while listening to the chorus of korimako/bellbird.

**Midday Adventures:** Choose from:

- A thrilling Discovery Jet ride to a secret Rakaia River beach.
- A hike along Washpen Falls featuring waterfalls and stunning scenery.
- A high-country horse trek along the Rakaia River.

**Evening:** Dine at The Clubhouse at Fable Terrace Downs Resort, savoring fresh, locally inspired dishes. Wrap up your day with a soak in Sophie's wood-fired hot tub beneath the stars.

Enjoy a perfect blend of relaxation, adventure, and nature in Selwyn's stunning landscape.



## MERCHANT OF VENISON PAN-SEARED VENISON RUMP WITH RED WINE JUS

Bring family and friends together this summer with a dish that's as impressive as it is delicious. Merchant Venison rump steaks, perfectly pan-seared and paired with a luscious red wine jus, makes for an unforgettable meal worth savouring.

### INGREDIENTS

- Merchant of Venison rump steak
- Neutral oil (eg. canola or grapeseed)
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 tbsp butter
- 2 tbsp olive oil

### RED WINE JUS

- 1 small shallot or ½ onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 cup red wine (eg. Shiraz or Merlot)
- 1 cup beef or venison stock
- 1 tsp fresh thyme leaves (or ½ tsp dried thyme)
- 1 tbsp butter

### INSTRUCTIONS

- Let the steak come to room temperature. Massage with oil and season lightly.
- Heat a cast iron pan, adding olive oil and butter. When the butter foams, sear the steak until beautifully caramelised, about 1–2 minutes per side. Rest on a warm plate for 10 minutes.
- For the jus, sauté the shallot/onion in the same pan until softened, add garlic for a minute. Deglaze with red wine, scraping up all the pan's flavourful bits. Reduce by half, add stock and thyme, and simmer until slightly thickened. Finish with butter for a silky shine.
- Slice the rested steak against the grain for tenderness, spoon over the glossy jus, and serve.

