

# New winemaker in deep south

JOELLE THOMSON

ROSIE DUNPHY'S journey into wine has been all about cool climates from training in viticulture in the United Kingdom to owning Coal Pit Vineyard in Central Otago. And now she has a new winemaker who has also specialised in cool climate winemaking around the world.

Anika Willner has experience in winemaking in Stellenbosch, South Africa; Marlborough at

Wither Hills, the upper Mosel in Germany; the Yarra Valley and Tasmania in Australia and Oregon in the United States.

Willner sees Central Otago as a benchmark region for Pinot Noir in Australasia, particularly the Gibbston Valley, which she describes as “truly cool climate and also alpine”.

“It’s an unusual, interesting and very challenging place to grow grapes and make wine.



Winemaker Anika Willner  
- new on board at Coal Pit  
Vineyards in Gibbston Valley.

This year I’m going to do a lot more experimentation with vineyard expressions – we’re going to ferment at 480 hectares above sea level, behind the winery.”

Her aim is to capture the influence of elevation and different yeast strains on the taste of the wine.

The 2019 vintage will be Willner’s first entire vintage at Coal Pit and winemaking

consultant, Ollie Masters, will also be part of the new style direction at the small winery.

Owner Rosie Dunphy was living in Ireland with her husband, Mark, when she decided to study viticulture at Plumpton College in southern England. And the stars aligned when the couple were ready to come home to New Zealand and they saw the sale of Coal Pit vineyard in Gibbston Valley.