



June trade launch for Rathfinny's first 'Sussex Sparkling' wines

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After eight years of planning, planting, winemaking and ageing, Rathfinny Wine Estate will release its first Sussex Sparkling wines to the trade on June 1. These are a Blanc de Blancs 2014 and a Rosé Brut 2015.

The estate was established in 2010 by co-owners, husband and wife Mark and Sarah Driver, on the site of a working arable farm.

Rathfinny's first Sussex Sparkling wines, produced conforming to the strict Sussex PDO guidelines which ensure provenance as well as quality, were bottled in early 2015. They were launched at Somerset House on April 24.

Brand ambassador Rob Buckhaven said: "We're proud of our first sparkling wines and to be launching onto the world stage at such a pivotal moment in the trajectory of English sparkling wines is beyond exciting. Our 2014



Mark and Sarah Driver (centre) with the vineyard team at the Rathfinny launch

Blanc de Blancs, made from 100 per cent Chardonnay has been aged for thirty-six months on the yeast lees. It has wonderful aromas of peach on the nose, with a delicate citrus-fresh palate.

The 2015 Rathfinny Rosé has a stunning light-coral tone, a nose of Chantilly cream-drizzled strawberries and a long, elegant peachy finish."

Mark Driver said: "It's taken eight years of hard work to

get to this point. It's fantastic to share our first sparkling wines with everyone.

"They are a superb reflection of our fantastic terroir. We want to thank everyone who has worked so

hard over the last eight years to get us to this point. It's been worth it."

As well a wine producer the estate is a popular destination for visitors, walkers and wine enthusiasts, with organised vineyard tours from the winery and wine tastings at the Gun Room in Alfriston, while the Flint Barns provide 'home from home' accommodation and Sunday lunches. During the summer, as well as tours, the estate hosts residency 'pop ups' with up and coming chefs.

With renowned winemaker Jonathan Médard from Épernay, and Cameron Roucher from New Zealand managing the Estate, Rathfinny plans to achieve quality levels that will see its Sussex Sparkling wines winning awards the world over.

A plan for international export will involve Rathfinny selling up to 50 per cent of production to overseas markets in Europe, Asia and North America.

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