A truly magic box

15 Sep 2010 by Jancis Robinson

I'm in love. The other day I finally opened a large yellow and red box that had been sent to me by Fromm Vineyards in New Zealand and found that my dreams had come true.

This box, called a Jumbo Box by shippers DHL, safely transported 12 heavy wine bottles on the longest wine journey on earth and was made up entirely of strong, cleverly designed cardboard. Below is the view from above.

There was not one horrid shaving of polystyrene. No sticky tape. Not a staple, nor the merest smear of glue. It offered a sturdy encasement for all those bottles by the clever folding of 12 cardboard encasings which, once I had extracted the bottles, could be folded completely flat, as below, for recycling.

According to DHL, these miraculous packages are available in 59 countries, and the name Jumbo Box is gradually being phased out in favour of a service being renamed Express Easy. This is part of an initiative launched by DHL Express last year to offer a more environmentally friendly packaging range made from 100% recyclable material.

In the UK the service is available from DHL's almost 1,000 Servicepoints, which are located in DHL offices and some branches of WH Smiths, Rymans and Staples. But of course their chief use should be in major wine-producing countries. What a delightful contrast to the usual obdurate, non recyclable, extremely voluminous polystyrene/styrofoam bottle coffins.

When I complain about these, wine producers tell me that breakages are just too great in any other packaging. I beg to differ.