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THE ULTIMATE BURGUNDY REFERENCE

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Statement of Principles

It is important that readers understand how I collect and evaluate the information that is reported in the pages of **Burghound.com** (the tasting notes and information are the sole responsibility of the author).

- I am personally responsible for all of my business expenses without exception. This includes airfare, hotels and effectively all of my meals. The purpose is as clear as it is simple: No conflicts of interest. *I do not accept nor do I seek any subsidy, in any form, from anybody.*
- Sample bottles are accepted for evaluation and commentary, much as book reviewers accept advance copies of new releases. I insist, however, that these sample bottles represent the final wines to be sold under that particular label.
- Finished, bottled wines are assigned scores as these wines are market-ready. Wines tasted from barrel, however, are scored within a range. This reflects the reality that a wine tasted from barrel is not a finished product.
- Wines are evaluated within the context of their *appellations*. Simply put, that means I expect a *grand cru* Burgundy to reflect its exalted status.

While the concept of *terroir* remains a controversial issue in the opinion of many people, it is not controversial to the Burgundian mindset—or to me, either. I attempt to convey, where appropriate, how certain wines are particularly good, or particularly bad, at expressing their underlying *terroir*. This is admittedly a difficult thing, rightly open to discussion among the Burgundians themselves, never mind an outside observer such as myself. Nevertheless, it is fundamental to great Burgundy. Mere "hedonism" is just that: empty pleasure seeking. Burgundy can deliver so much more—if it is asked.

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A Brief Word About Scores:

Numerical scores are endlessly debated among wine lovers. Inevitably, critics tend to emphasize certain characteristics at the expense of others. What follows is an explication of scores at **Burghound.com** and the underlying taste values they reflect.

Simply put, Burgundies that emphasize purity, elegance, overall balance and a clear expression of the underlying *terroir* are rated more highly than Burgundies that don't deliver these qualities. Other important characteristics include typicity, richness, balanced extraction, length and harmony. For example, a Volnay should taste like a Volnay and a *grand cru* should deliver a *grand cru* drinking experience.

The score is a summation of the taster's thoughts about a wine. It does not actually express those thoughts. Clearly, a mere number cannot fully represent the nuanced, detailed impression conveyed by a tasting note.

Please note: Wines are scored based on their expected quality at peak drinkability. Many *grands crus* that will, I believe, "be" a 92 may not necessarily taste like a 92-point wine when young, thanks to the tannins or general inaccessibility.

Wines rated 90 points or above are worth a special effort to find and cellar. Wines rated 85 or above are recommended, **especially among regional and villages level wines**. There will be relatively few 90+ point wines, simply because there are relatively few outstanding and superlative wines. Finished, bottled wines are assigned specific scores as these wines are market-ready. Wines tasted from barrel are scored within a range. This reflects the reality that a wine tasted from barrel is not a finished, market-ready product.

95 – 100:	Truly incomparable and emotionally thrilling. A wine so rated is as good as a wine gets. By definition, it is reference standard for its <i>appellation</i> .
90 – 94:	Outstanding. Worth a special effort to purchase and cellar and will provide memorable drinking experiences.
85 – 89:	Good to High quality. Wines that offer solid quality in every respect and generally very good typicity. "Good Value" wines will often fall into this category. Worth your attention.
80 – 84:	Average to Good quality. The wine is "correct", displays no noticeable flaws and will provide pleasing, if straightforward, drinking.
76 – 79:	Barely Acceptable quality. The wine is not worth your attention nor is it a good value.
75 and Below:	Don't Bother. A wine with noticeable, irremediable flaws.

Estimated Maturities:

Estimating a window of when any pinot based wine will be at its peak is an extremely difficult thing to do with precision. The time frames that you see after the score is my best estimate as to when any given wine will likely be at its best. This is of course simply an educated guess about how the wine will evolve and assumes that the wine will have been responsibly shipped and stored, which as long-time collectors know is not always the case. Just as importantly, the time suggested windows are based on how I personally prefer my Burgundies and pinots. This effectively means that for reds, there is still obvious freshness and vibrancy remaining to both the fruit and the flavors and while the tannic structure will be largely resolved, it by no means suggests that a completely smooth palate will exist devoid of any firmness. Especially tannic and or concentrated wines will necessarily have wider windows for obvious reasons. For whites, the windows are designed to indicate that point at which youthful fruit has passed into secondary nuances with more fully developed complexity as well as when the textures have rounded out and the sometimes pointed acidity has mellowed. Important note: what the estimated maturities do NOT suggest is how long a wine will remain structurally sound and still capable of providing some enjoyment as many Burgundies, in particular, are capable of remarkably long periods of graceful decline; however, beyond a certain point they will have passed their peaks and should be drunk, no matter how intellectually interesting they may be. As with anything this subjective, there is no substitute for your own experience and I offer these estimated maturities as a general guideline, not gospel and as the saying goes, your mileage may vary.

The 213 Producers Reviewed in This Issue

Chablis, Mâconnais, Côte Chalonnaise:

Amarine
Barraud
Bavencoff
Belouse, de la
Billaud, Samuel
Bret Brothers
Cellier Aux Moines, du
Chaize, Château de la
Chantemerle, de
Chanzy
Closerie des Alisiers
Cray, Château du
Croix Senaillet, de la
Defaix et Fils, Bernard
Drouhin, Joseph
Dujardin
Dutron, Lucie
Etroyes, Château d'
Fagot, Jean-Charles
Girardin, Vincent
Fèvre, William
Folie, de la
Gérard
Goichot, André
Guignottes, les
Guillemot-Michel
Hâtes, des
Jaeger-Defaix
Jolly et Fils
Laroche
Lavernette, Château de
Maillet, Nicolas
Malandes, des
Manciat, Marie-Pierre
Martin, Maurice
Michelet, Stéphanie and Vincent
Moreau, Louis
Morin, Olivier
Normand, Sylvaine & Alain
Perchaud, Corinne
Prosper-Maufoux
Race, Denis
Renaud, Pascal & Mireille
Rey, Eve & Michel
Roc des Boutires, du

Servin, Domaine
Soufrandière, La
Testut
Trouillet-Lebeau
Vitallis, Château
Vocoret et Fils
Beaujolais:

Arthaud, Jean
Beauregard, Château de
Bêche, de la
Blain Soeur & Frère
Bouland, Daniel
Burrier, Joseph
Chermette, Pierre-Marie
Chopin, Raphaël
Depardon, Olivier & Alexis
Durdilly et Fils, Paul
Durdilly/Domaine les Gryphées, Pierre
Epicurieux, de l'
Heitz, Armand
Madone, de la
Manoir du Carra
Moulin-à-Vent, Château du
Perrachon, Laurent
Piron, Dominique
Pizay, Château de
Vallette, Bernard

En Plus Burgundy:

Aegerter, Jean-Luc et Paul
Bellene, de
Bellene, Roche de
Bertagna
Bouchard Père & Fils
Chartron et Trébuchet
Ecard, Maurice
Gras, Alain
Jadot, Louis
Mongear-Mugneret
Mortet, Thierry
Raquin, Patricia
Serrigny, Françoise et Marie-Laure
Verdet, Aurélien

California Pinot Noir:

Adelaida Cellars
Albatross Ridge
Alesia Vineyards
Black Kite Cellars
Clarice Wine Company
Crosby Roamann
Cutruzzola Vineyards
Della, Domaine
Dutton-Goldfield Winery
Eden Rift Vineyards
Flowers Vineyard & Winery
Foxen Winery & Vineyard
Gary Farrell Vineyards and
Winery
Hanzell Vineyards
Kendric Vineyards
Madson Wines
Merry Edwards
Neely Wine
Pelio Estate Vineyards
Rhys Vineyards
Siduri Wines
Tongue Dancer Wines
Vie Winery
Williams Selyem Winery
Winery SF, The
Withers Winery, The

Oregon Pinot Noir:

1789 Wines
Beacon Hill Winery &
Vineyard
Big Table Farm
Caballus Cellars
Chapter 24 Vineyards
Coeur de Terre Vineyard
Divio, Domaine
Dobbes Family Estate
Fullerton Wines
J. Christopher Wines
J. Crow Wines
Johan Vineyards
L'Envoyé, Maison
Martin Woods Winery
Montinore Estate
Open Claim Vineyards
Serene, Domaine
Siduri Wines

Champagne:

Bellefont, Besserat de
Bollinger
Gosset
Henriot
Jacquesson
J-M Sélèque
Lancelot-Pienne
Naveau
Petit & Bajan
Pommery

Mini 2002 Champagne

Horizontal:

Bollinger Extra Brut – R.D.
Gosset Extra Brut – Celebris
Krug Brut
Moët et Chandon Brut – Dom
Perignon Rosé
Piper Heidsieck Brut – Cuvée
Rare
Taittinger Brut – Comtes de
Champagne Blanc de Blancs

En Plus South Africa

Storm Wines

Progress Report New

Zealand Pinot Noir:

Akarua Winery
Akitu
Alexandra Wine Company
Allan Scott Family Winemakers
Astrolabe Wines
Ata Rangi Vineyard
Bell Hill Vineyard
Big Sky Wines
Black Estate Wine
Blank Canvas Wines
Boneline, The
Borthwick Vineyard
Brightwater Vineyards
Bristol Farm Wines
Burn Cottage Vineyard
Ceres Wines
Clos Henri Vineyard
Corofin Wines
Dog Point Vineyards
Drumsara Wines
The Elder Pinot
Felton Road Wines
Grasshopper Rock

Greenhough Vineyard
Greystone Wines
Greywacke
Hermit Ram, The
Huia Vineyards
Innocent Bystander
Jules Taylor Wines
Kelly Washington Wines
Kumeu River Wines
Lamont Wines
Lawson's Dry Hills
Little Beauty
Loveblock
Lowburn Ferry Wines
Main Divide
Milton Vineyards & Winery
Mondillo Vineyards
Mt. Beautiful
Mt. Difficulty
Nautilus Estate
Neudorf Vineyards
Nga Waka Vineyard
Novum Wines
Ostler Vineyards
Pegasus Bay
Pyramid Valley Vineyards
Quartz Reef Wines
Rewa, Domaine
Rimapere Winery
Rippon
Rockburn Vineyard
Seifried Estate Winery
Seresin Estate
Seven Terraces
Sileni Estates
Sineann Winery
Smith & Sheth Wine
Company
Spy Valley Wines
Tablelands Wine Company
Te Mata Estate
te Pā Family Vineyards
Ten Sisters
Toi Toi Wines
Two Paddocks
URLAR Vineyard
Valli Vineyards
Villa Maria Estate
Whitecliff Vineyard &
Winery
Whitehaven Wine Co.
Wooing Tree Vineyard

The Covid-19 Issue 80 – Part One

Dear Burghound Subscriber: One year ago, when I was considering what observations that I might make to commemorate Issue 80, which represents the 20th Anniversary of Burghound, it never occurred to me that I would be writing to you under such difficult circumstances. The summer of 2020 is the first trip to Burgundy that I have missed in those 20 years though I am both pleased and honored to report that the office of the French Minister of the Interior granted me a sort of 'diplomatic passport' to visit Burgundy to continue my work reporting directly from the cellars of Burgundy.

I went to France a few weeks earlier than usual for my Fall trip, specifically for the purpose of visiting many of the domaines located in Chablis, the Côte Chalonnaise and the Mâconnais that I typically visit each summer. Due to time constraints, it wasn't be possible to visit every domaine, but I did visit the vast majority in order to bring you the comprehensive coverage that you have come to expect in the pages of Burghound. Based on those visits, we will publish reviews on the 2019 vintage from barrel and revisit a number of 2018s in bottle. These reviews will be available to subscribers in the form of a supplemental Issue (electronic format only; no printed/mailed version will be available) before year end; The Covid-19 Issue #80 – Part Two if you will.

Once my visits in Chablis, the Côte Chalonnaise and the Mâconnais concluded, I am now doing my usual seven-week deep dive into the Côte de Nuits to visit all the domaines that I normally do, circumstances, and health, permitting of course as they are unpredictable. The focus of these visits will be to assess the quality of the 2019 vintage as well as revisiting many wines from the irregular, but often excellent, 2018 vintage. These reviews will appear in Issue 81, due as scheduled in January 2021, as part of our normal publishing rhythm. I will also detail how each producer has weathered the Covid-19 pandemic, not only in terms of the 2020 harvest but also with respect to the *élevage* of the 2019s and including, where pertinent, commercial concerns or changes.

With respect to The Covid-19 Issue 80 – Part One, the Burghound team began working as early as last March to assemble a variety of bottled wines from all the areas that we typically cover. We did this as we believed that returning to Burgundy under the Covid travel restrictions might prove problematic; fears that were in the end justified. We wish to credit, and genuinely thank, all of the importers, wineries and domaines that generously responded to our requests for in-bottle samples.

Because of this Issue's diverse focus and unusual circumstances, there will not be Burghound Selection Charts for the Burgundies divided into Top Value, Sweet Spot and Don't Miss categories. However, wines that are especially good for their respective classification or category and fit these parameters are of course noted as usual and can be searched for using this criterion in the database. There are however, Burghound Selections for both California and Oregon pinots. Happy reading!

As Burghound is about to turn 21, Erica, Christopher and I cannot fully express how touched we are by the continued support readers have blessed us with, over so many years. In particular, we are humbled by having received so many heartfelt sentiments wishing us good health and safe travels in these difficult times. We in return wish our loyal readers the same: Stay strong and be extra safe as Covid is a remorseless enemy. Let us all fervently hope that 2021 brings a return to normalcy along with glasses full of fine Burgundies, Pinots and Champagnes!

Sincerely,

The Burghound Team

A Word about the Tasting Notes:

Normally, 95% of the following notes would be based on tastings conducted in June and July 2020, however due to Covid 19, travel was not possible. For this Issue, 100% of the wines were reviewed from bottle in my home office. I plan to visit as many producers as possible in September and October in Chablis, Côte Chalonnaise and Mâconnais to barrel sample the 2019s, and in-bottle 2018s. As noted above, we will issue a supplement to this issue (electronic version only) later this year.

Note: finished, bottled wines are assigned scores, as these wines are market ready. Wines tasted from barrel are scored within a range, which simply reflects the reality that they are not finished, market-ready wines. The wines in the presentation boxes are listed alphabetically while the tasting notes are presented in the order that the winemaker chose to present the wines; this often is an indication as to the esteem in which the winemaker holds each wine.

Our policy on reviewing wines is simple: During domaine or winery visits, if a wine is presented for consideration, and it is to the best of their knowledge representative and has finished both its primary and secondary fermentations, then it is reviewed – no exceptions. So if, for example, you are looking at a range of wines from a specific producer and you do not see a particular example, it means that it was not presented for review; it does NOT mean that it received a poor score. If it is not in the database, it has not been reviewed. If you do not see any wines for a particular producer in a given year in the database, then it means the producer was not visited – again, it does NOT mean their wines were reviewed but found wanting.

SPECIAL REPORT

Current Release New Zealand Pinot Noir

158 Wines from 73 Producers

This Special Report on New Zealand pinots will be our third and it covers 158 wines from 73 different producers from all of the major producing regions. It succeeds two prior reports, one in Issue 64 (October 2016) and another in Issue 52 (October 2013) for those who might wish to refer to them. It is a real pleasure to have the opportunity to revisit such a large sample of New Zealand pinots and report my findings to you. I have visited New Zealand on multiple occasions over the years and have been increasingly intrigued by the progress producers are making with pinot noir. As such I was happy to have the chance to have another look.

Furthermore, we continue to receive numerous requests from Burghound subscribers regarding my view about the quality of New Zealand pinots and thus I thought that it would be of interest to do another broad-based review. To that end we collaborated with David Strada, who worked with the New Zealand Winegrowers Association here in the United States, to put together a broad-based tasting of recent vintages. I am grateful to David for his efforts yet again, as he always does a terrific job coordinating matters as a remarkably large group of wineries chose to participate – even in these challenging times.

As the tasting notes will confirm, it's clear that there are some terrific pinots currently being produced in New Zealand. Like every pinot-producing region in the world, it is also true that the quality is variable but when the wines are good, they are really good. Moreover, fine examples are being produced from all of New Zealand's wine regions.

In Issue 64, the results of that tasting led me to tentatively conclude that the best region for pinot was arguably Marlborough followed by Central Otago and Canterbury. However, based on this most recent tasting, the results honestly led to no clear winner though there are clear contenders. As long-time Burghound readers know, we don't hand out participation trophies, so every region legitimately earned its praise by producing some splendid wines.

What does seem clear though, and more important than which region currently has the "lead", is that real progress is being made everywhere. The average vine age is climbing, winegrowers are becoming ever more closely attuned as to how to get the best from their specific plots, not only in terms of viticulture, but vinification and élevage as well. I also saw fewer wines with technical faults, which is also one of the keys to preserving the quality that the vineyards give.

Perhaps the most promising aspect (because it's the most critical) is that I'm beginning to see a real sense of terroir emerge in the wines. I say this because a number of producers submitted two or three vintages of the same wine and I was thrilled to see that, in many cases, the 'there' that is supposed to be there in a wine with pretensions to express the underlying terroir, really was 'there'! This is the highest compliment that I, or any other observer, can offer because the underlying message is that not only are the vineyards being given voice...but they also have something consistent to say.

To be sure, we have yet to see New Zealand's full pinot noir potential revealed and this is to be expected. But rather than this being a problem, I believe that it offers solid evidence to be exceptionally excited about the future. I say this because it appears that New Zealand is now prepared to embark on what could be viewed as Stage Two of the terroir game. While there is no clear timeline delineation, prior to this point New Zealand was producing very good to excellent pinot noir but not necessarily wines that spoke clearly and unambiguously of their origins. The same could be said for many regions in California, Oregon and Canada as well so this is hardly unique to New Zealand.

Stage Two is to now take that excellence and continue to refine what the individual terroirs have to say. It is in this way that New Zealand can one day lay claim to producing pinot-based wines that consistently rival the best in the world. Notice the express use of 'pinot noir-based' wines rather than the more generic term pinots noirs. Burgundy produces pinot-based wines that are not really thought of as pinot noirs but rather by their individual terroirs. Stated differently, pinot noir is the vehicle, not the message. Job #1 for the New Zealand producer community is to continue producing not just outstanding quality but to help consumers understand and appreciate their most gifted terroirs. The world will be watching!

OVERVIEW: For subscribers who may not be familiar with New Zealand and its various wine growing regions, I include an overview below.

New Zealand is comprised of two main islands called, appropriately enough, the North Island and the South Island. The region's varied landscape covers some 1,600 km from the sub-tropical Northland to the world's most southerly grape growing region of Central Otago. In addition to the moderating effect of the maritime climate the vineyards, none of which are farther than 129 km from the ocean, benefit from a temperate growing season marked by long hours of sunshine contrasted with fresh nights cooled by sea breezes. The cool temperatures also allow for a long ripening period that is important to achieving proper phenolic maturity of the fruit.

While researching for this article, all of my sources were terribly out of date because as the popularity of New Zealand's wines have soared, so have the number of wineries producing them as well as the viticultural processes used. According to New Zealand Wine (www.nzwine.com), there are over 717 registered wineries in New Zealand as of 2020. pinot noir is predominately grown in the cooler southerly regions and is now second only to sauvignon blanc in terms of production. Between 1999 and 2020, the area planted to all varieties soared to 39,935 ha. Of which, 5,642 hectares are currently planted to pinot noir.

Consistent with this explosion of wineries and vineyards, exports of New Zealand wines have grown exponentially. Consider that in 1981 only 2% of New Zealand wines were exported. Ten years later the total had grown to a respectable 12% and by 2001 the number had jumped to 35%. By 2011 exports had accelerated still further to an amazing 70% of the total production. In 2020 exports amounted to ~87%, with the two primary markets being the United States and the United Kingdom.

In much the same fashion as Australia, New Zealand has a long viticultural history with the earliest vine plantings dating back to 1819. In the 1840's the first documented wine was made and more soon followed. Unfortunately, in the 1940's phylloxera destroyed many vineyards in New Zealand and it wasn't until the 1960's that the *vitis vinifera* plantings made a comeback and high quality wines began to be produced on a small, and very local, scale.

For the most part, the first commercial plantings occurred in the mid-1970's in soils that varied from a mixture of alluvial deposits, schist, limestone, sandstone and silt and with varieties that were grafted to phylloxera resistant rootstock. Today, under the New Zealand Winegrowers' Sustainability Policy, wine must be made from 100% certified grapes in certified winemaking facilities and certification must be conferred through an independent audit.

While there are a number of major winegrowing regions throughout New Zealand, the primary pinot noir proceeding regions are in the cooler southerly regions: Wairarapa, Marlborough, Nelson, North Canterbury and Central Otago. The huge diversity in climates and soils enables a wide range of styles from these main pinot noir producing regions. Since the 1990s, plantings have expanded throughout all regions in the South Island and select sites in the North Island.

Of 5,642 ha planted to pinot noir, Marlborough has 2,663, Central Otago has 1,555, Wairarapa has 530, North Canterbury has 422, Hawke's Bay has 227, Nelson has 175, Waitaki Valley has 29 and Gisborne has 25.

In the interest of providing readers with a bit of background, we have cobbled together some basic information on each region and thank New Zealand Winegrowers for providing the information (www.nzwine.com).

MARLBOROUGH - Marlborough is now the largest wine producing region in the country, with nearly 75% of New Zealand's total active wine production, with over 27,000 ha of vines planted. There are three sub-regions within Marlborough: 1) Southern Valleys, which wraps around the surrounding hills of the Omaka, Fairhall, Brancott, Ben Morvan and Waihopai Valleys. Soils and meso-climates vary, but tend to be heavier and contain more clay than Wairau. It also becomes cooler and drier further south into the valleys. 2) Wairau Valley is composed of old, gravely riverbed soils and diverse aspects and rainfall that creates numerous meso-climates within this sub-region. Broadly, it covers a range of cooler, drier inland sites, barren stony, early ripening sites, and sea-breeze moderated coastal sites. 3) Awatere Valley is the most geographically distinct sub-region, lying south of the Wairau Valley and stretching inland from the sea, climbing towards the inland Kaikoura ranges. The sites tend to be cooler, drier, windier and often with a degree of elevations. For additional information, visit: <https://www.wine-marlborough.co.nz/the-region>

CENTRAL OTAGO – At one time the landscape was dominated by apricot and cherry orchards but now the focus is on grapes, with pinot noir being the primary variety representing over 88% of all plantings. Central Otago, the world's most southerly wine region, is really a series of sub-regions. 1) Gibbston is situated east of Queenstown along the spectacular Kawarau Gorge, and is the highest sub-region, with its cooler climate and north-facing hillside vines that ripen later than neighboring sub-regions. 2) Bannockburn is on the south bank of the Kawarau River, at the southern terminus of the Cromwell Valley, the vineyards occupy one of the warmest, driest sites in the region. Harvest can be up to a month ahead of other sub-regions. 3) Cromwell, Lowburn and Pisa is located on the western side of Lake Dunstan stretching north for some 25 km from the township of Cromwell. The majority of plantings are situated on the lower terraces and valley floor running parallel to the snow-capped Pisa mountain. 4) Bendigo is northeast of Cromwell, and has vines planted on gentle north facing slopes. Wide-scale plantings on stony soils capture the extreme climates with hot summer sun and cold clear nights. 5) Wanaka is a couple of mountain ranges and 80 km north of Queenstown, and is cooler and slightly wetter than the rest of the region. The lake provides welcome reflected radiation and mitigates frost producing delicate and vivid wines. 6) Alexandra is the most southerly sub-region with a climate that is dry and runs to extremes in both summer and winter. For more information visit: <https://www.centralotagowine.co>

WAIRARAPA (Martinborough) – With an early settler history, vines were first planted in 1883 but fell victim to the temperance movement in 1905. Wairarapa's modern wine history dates from the late 1970s. The three main subregions share broadly similar climate and soils yet also offer subtle differences in character. 1) Masterton is the largest town in Wairarapa, and was the first area grapes were planted in the region, over a century ago. The valley is shadowed by the Tararua ranges, and early morning frosts are common, contrasted by incredible hot summer days. 2) Gladstone is just south of the district's largest town, Masterton. This sub-region has free-draining river

terraces and a cooler climate with plenty of sunshine. Clay amongst the stony silt loams suits the predominant pinot noir. 3) Martinborough is a picturesque colonial village surrounded by small vineyards, tended by family-owned producers, and has a climate and soil profile similar to that of Burgundy with free-draining soils and a cool, dry climate. For more information visit: <https://www.wairarapawine.co.nz>

NORTH CANTERBURY – This wine region spans nearly 200 km of the South Island’s eastern coastline, with the Alps to the west and the Pacific Ocean to the east. It has a cool, dry climate with good sunshine for long growing seasons. As expected across large and diverse terrains, soil types vary. North Canterbury benefits from gravel deposits from its eponymous river plus limestone-derived clays on the hillsides which suit pinot noir. The vast, flat Canterbury Plains surrounding Christchurch comprise mainly of shallow free draining stony soils with varying alluvial deposits courtesy of the many braided river systems crossing the plains. The two sub-regions include: 1) Waipara Valley is a fast-growing sub-region about an hour’s drive north of Christchurch, with gravel and clay soils. 2) Canterbury Plains is a large area with vines planted from Banks Peninsula on the outskirts of Christchurch, west to Rolleston and West Melton then sweeping northward towards Waipara Valley. This predominantly flat (or very gently contoured) land has free-draining, shallow greywacke-based gravel soils and a slightly cooler climate. For more information visit: <https://www.northcanterburywines.co.nz>

NELSON – This picturesque region, is on the northwestern tip of the South Island and benefits from high sunshine hours, a sheltered, moderating coastal climate and free-draining, semi-fertile soil. Nelson is a boutique wine region long renowned for its bountiful crops and orchards, with wine roots that were cultivated in the mid-1800s, when German settlers planted the areas first grape vines to produce wine. Pioneering 1970s producers established the modern wine industry. The two sub-regions comprise: 1) Moutere Hills which is west of the city, and due to the hills is slightly warmer and wetter than Waimea and the gravel-threaded clay soils give richness and texture to the wines. It is this location where Nelson’s early pioneers first planted. 2) Waimea Plains is Maori for “river garden”. This traditional area for arable crops, orchards and hops has seen most of Nelson’s recent vineyard expansion. It has stony alluvial soils and a moderating maritime influence. For more information visit: <https://winenelson.co.nz>

WAITAKI VALLEY – The Waitaki Valley essentially forms a geographical link between Central Otago and the South Island’s eastern coast, the legacy of a long, braided river system snaking down from the Southern Alps to the sea. A defining feature of the region is its limestone, courtesy of an ancient geological fault line pushing a 38 million year old seabed up alongside the river, leaving a limestone-rich north-facing slope where keen-eyed viticulturists and winemakers recognized its present day potential. The region’s bedrock soils have been subjected to the ebb and flows of both glaciers and rivers across the millennia and the vineyards in the Waitaki Valley are typically planted on either the weathered limestone slopes, or the free-draining greywacke/schist/limestone river gravels of former riverbeds. These very stony soils have an important heat retaining capacity, and reflect back not only heat but also sunlight, important in a cool winegrowing region that does not have especially high sunshine hours. While Waitaki Valley has a distinctly cool climate, its relatively warm summers and long, dry autumns help extend the region’s growing season. Frost is an ever-present risk at either end of the growing season, but being tucked within the Southern Alp’s rain shadow means the very dry climate reduces disease pressure and allows production of a wide range of styles. With vines first planted in 2001, this is a relatively new wine region. For more information visit: <https://winesofnz.com/pages/waitaki-valley-wine-region>

HAWK’S BAY - New Zealand’s second largest wine region, sunny Hawke’s Bay has been an abundant source of fine wine since 1851. Vines were first planted in 1851 by Marist missionaries. This is a relatively large and diverse region and has a temperate climate and plentiful sunshine. The sub-regions include: 1) Coastal Areas has two grape growing areas located directly on the coast with the most dramatic effects of the temperate climate and long growing season. There are gravelly soils in Bay View in the northern Esk River Valley area and Te Awanga in the South. 2) Hillsides has been increasingly explored for the differences offered in soil and altitude; they are predominately planted in red varieties. 3) Alluvial Plains is shaped by rivers and crisscrossed with gravel beds, free-draining alluvial soils and stony terraces. The plains fan out between Havelock and Napier, covering the pioneering vineyards of Taradale and Meeanee plus the Gimblett Gravels and Bridge Pa Triangle area. 4) River Valleys runs across Hawke’s Bay where four rivers over time created a huge diversity of grape growing sites. These sites have provided sheltered environments, with variations in altitude, aspect to the sun and variations in soil type. For more information visit: <http://hawkesbaywine.co.nz/wines>

GISBORNE - Gisborne is home to a mix of large producers, boutique wineries, and entrepreneurial growers, who are continuously exploring new varieties and vineyard sites. A dynamic food and wine scene completes the picture. Rich in history, Gisborne claims Captain Cook’s first landfall, as well as being the first place in New Zealand to see the sunrise. Chardonnay is the dominant variety and there are only 25 ha of pinot noir plantings here.

AUCKLAND - This large and very diverse region is home to some of New Zealand’s biggest wine companies, as well as numerous high-quality boutique vineyards. Auckland is one of New Zealand’s oldest wine regions, established in the early 1900s by passionate Croatian, Lebanese and English winemakers. Spread across a large, geographically diverse area, the Auckland wine region encompasses three distinctive subregions, the island of Waiheke, historic West Auckland and stretches north to the coastal enclave of Matakana. Chardonnay and merlot are the primary varieties followed by syrah and pinot gris, with only 13 ha of pinot noir plantings.

NORTHLAND - As its name implies, Northland is New Zealand’s most northerly region, with pockets of winegrowing stretching from Karikari in the north, to Mangawhai in the south. Northland’s long, narrow shape means there is nowhere further than 50 kilometers from the ocean, and its northerly latitude delivers as close to a subtropical climate as is found in New Zealand. Vineyards are generally

clustered in the coastal areas around Whangarei, the Bay of Islands and Kaitia, taking advantage of both the flatter coastal land and tempering sea breezes. Pinot noir is not planted in this region which focuses on chardonnay, syrah, merlot and pinot gris.

2020 UPDATE - The following information was provided by the New Zealand Winegrowers, Inc. (NZW) in their 2020 Annual Report. 2019 marked 200 years from the year when the very first grape vines were planted into New Zealand soils by Reverend Samuel Marsden at Kerikeri in the Bay of Islands.

An important milestone for NZW, was the opening of the Bragoto Research Institute's Research Winery. The new facility provides a base here they will work on trials, research and work with educators and students. Their research focuses on sustainability (through their vineyard ecosystems pest and disease project) and quality (through their pinot noir project), among other topics.

Like all countries of the world, Covid 19 posed numerous challenges. The country imposed a strong national stay-at-home order, which activated just as harvest was beginning in March. However, they were able to complete their grape harvest as an essential business, but there was a great deal of effort and stress involved in doing so safely. The harvest represented near perfect growing conditions for most of NZ, with 503,756 tons (457,000 tonnes) harvested. For pinot noir production 37,594 tons (34,105 tonnes) were harvested in 2020.

Irrespective of the challenges the industry faced, for their year ending June 30, 2020 achieved record exports totaling \$1.92 billion, up 5% from last year. Domestic sales were approximately at \$500 million. It appears that NZ will keep their borders closed for much of the coming year, so the NZW is reconsidering their tourism activities as well as workforce requirements and more.

NZW's advocacy activities focus on guidance for members, wine standards, government engagement, intellectual property protection, promoting social responsibility, education and encouraging free and fair trade.

As noted above, the Bragoto Research Institute has been working on a pinot noir program: Quality and Productivity, Diversification Objective - Growing returns through tools enabling high-quality pinot noir production at higher yields. The program began in 2017 and runs to September 2022. This \$10.3 million funded project has seen good progress in the research fields of sensory perception, chemistry, and viticultural and winemaking techniques, which have allowed researchers to begin formulating hypotheses around the definitions and measurements of quality for New Zealand pinot noir. The past year saw the expansion of the program with the addition of two projects to examine the effect of macromolecules (polysaccharides) and their content in wine, as well as further understanding of green/herbaceous sensorial perception and implications for product acceptance. To find out more about the 2020/2021 Bragoto Research Institute Research Projects visit bri.co.nz/current-research/. In addition to research reports, two dozen articles were written for NZ Winegrower Magazine over the course of the year with progress or final results on levy-funded research. Ranging from pinot noir profiling to trunk disease, the breadth of the articles illustrates the breadth of our research program. These articles can all be found at bri.co.nz/news

Over the past 12 months, NZW has implemented of a range of strategic and operational initiatives, intended to refocus and reinforce our industry's commitment to sustainability, including the refocus on six core areas of sustainability: water, waste, pest and disease, climate change, people and soil. They have adopted key environmental industry health indicators on sustainability and set a climate change goal for the industry to become carbon neutral by 2050. Sustainability has been a fundamental part of the New Zealand wine industry for well over 20 years. Over 96% of New Zealand's vineyard area is Sustainable Winegrowing New Zealand certified.

Over the past year, the Board of NZW has taken several steps to highlight the importance of the risk posed by climate change. They retained a firm to assess the industry's current carbon production footprint and will develop guidance around the key sources of emissions in the winery and on the vineyard.

Organic winegrowing in NZ continues and for the 2019 vintage NZ had 111 certified organic grape growers and 73 certified organic wineries, ranging from artisanal family operations to large companies with multiple organize sites.

NZW stresses that three quarters of the country's wineries are producers working with less than 20 hectares. There are 717 wineries of which 262 offering on-site tastings, 120 offer on-site dining options, 66 offer rooms for rent, and 72 offer other interactive activities for guests.

Note: Burghound.com does not typically indicate retail prices due to often extreme variability between one country and another. When they are available however we do include the U.S. importer provided prices as a rough indication of value.

Valli Vineyards (Central Otago, NZ)

2018	➔ Pinot Noir – Bannockburn Vineyard	red	91
2018	Pinot Noir – Bendigo Vineyard	red	90
2018	Pinot Noir – Gibbston Vineyard	red	88
2018	Pinot Noir – Waitaki Vineyard	red	88
2016	Pinot Noir – Bendigo Vineyard	red	90

Winemaker Grant Taylor has been producing wines in Otago since 1993 when only 20 ha were planted to grapes. After producing wines for a number of wineries, he now focuses on his own label, Valli which was established in 1998 and named after his great-great grandfather, Giuseppe Valli. The winery is based around the close-planted estate in Gibbston and also produces single-vineyard pinot noirs from Bannockburn, Bendigo and another from Otago's newer sub-region, the Waitaki Valley. The wines are not fined or filtered and all bottled under screwcap. For more information contact 64(0).210.821.3057 or visit: www.valliwine.com.

2018 Pinot Noir – Bannockburn Vineyard: (Central Otago, 13.5%). A combination of both red and dark currant is complemented by notes of plum and discreet spice wisps. The rich and nicely voluminous middle weight flavors possess a velvety mid-palate texture before concluding in a dusty and youthfully austere finale. This needs to develop more depth, but the underlying material appears up to the task over the next 4 to 6 years. Worth a look. 91/2024+

2018 Pinot Noir – Bendigo Vineyard: (Central Otago, 14%). A subtle whiff of menthol sits atop the ripe aromas of poached plum and dark raspberry along with a pretty violet wisp. The delicious, round and velvet-textured flavors possess good vibrancy on the dusty, sappy and somewhat rustic finale. The style and structure of this wine is very much like the 2016 version, which speaks to the consistent character. 90/2024+

2018 Pinot Noir – Gibbston Vineyard: (Central Otago, 13.5%). A distinct note of spiced herbal tea adds breadth to the cool dark currant and violet-scented nose. The rounded and vibrant though not nearly as rich or concentrated flavors retain very good precision that carries over to the dusty and ever-so-mildly drying finish. This is finer than the Bendigo but not as well balanced. 88/2022+

2018 Pinot Noir – Waitaki Vineyard: (North Otago, 13%). Here too there is a whiff of herbal tea to the softly wooded nose of various red berry aromas that are sprinkled with hints of anise, violet and cinnamon. The vibrant though not especially dense flavors also exhibit very good delineation before culminating in a slightly bitter pit fruit and tangy finish that flirts with dryness. The balance may improve as the tannins resolve though I suspect that this will always have a touch of edginess. 88/2024+

2016 Pinot Noir – Bendigo Vineyard: (Central Otago, 14%). The nose possesses a similar fruit profile to the 2018 Bannockburn but is noticeably spicier. The richer and more seductive medium-bodied flavors are plush to the point of opulence while offering solid depth and sneaky good persistence on the mildly rustic finish. This is not refined but it certainly doesn't lack for character. 90/2024+