



PHIPPS

***Embargoed until Friday 30<sup>th</sup> November 00.00 (Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> November 11.00 UK GMT)***

## **Not just Sauvignon Blanc: New Zealand Chardonnay and Pinot Noir impress at the International Wine Challenge**

*Six of nine Gold medals for New Zealand awarded to Chardonnay and Pinot Noir wines*

In the latest round of the International Wine Challenge (IWC), the world's most influential wine competition, New Zealand's winemakers picked up 285 medals - an increase on last year's performance. Nine of the medals awarded to New Zealand were Gold, putting New Zealand in fourth place behind France, Australia and Portugal in the medal table.

Although the country may be best known internationally for its crisp Sauvignon Blancs, the top-performing Kiwi wines in this competition were made from Pinot Noir and Chardonnay grapes, taking six of the nine Golds between them.

The Gold-winning Chardonnays came from Kumeu River Wines, Trinity Hill and Marisco Vineyards. The top Pinot Noirs came from Central Otago producers Joval Family Wines and Ceres Wines, and Marlborough producer Delta Wines.

Trinity Hill was also awarded a Gold for its **Gimblett Gravels Syrah 2016**.

The two Sauvignon Blanc wines that won Golds were dessert wines – The **Ned Noble Sauvignon Blanc** from Marisco Vineyards and the **Brancott Estate Letter Series B Late Harvest Sauvignon Blanc** from Pernod Ricard Winemakers.

Dr Jamie Goode, IWC co-chair, explained: "2017 and 2018 were both difficult vintages for Marlborough, New Zealand's biggest wine region. Yet there were still some smart wines, including some nice 2017 Pinot Noirs. It just shows the danger of writing off entire vintages. It's all about the individual wines."

Oz Clarke, another co-chair, added: "Despite a tricky 2018 vintage for New Zealand we were delighted to find a significant number of Sauvignons which absolutely hit the fresh, zesty spot."

Many of these were among the 58 New Zealand wines awarded Silver medals, 129 Bronze, and 89 Commended.

Dr Goode said: "I think that if a wine achieves a medal in the IWC then it's a safe bet for a good bottle this Christmas. It takes a lot to get a Silver, and the Golds are rare!"

Charles Metcalfe, IWC co-chair and founder, added: "We don't just hand out medals to our favourite winemakers! Every medal has been awarded after a blind tasting by experts from all over the world."

The first part of the 2019 International Wine Challenge – Tranche 1 – saw 212 wine experts from 23 countries judging the wines over four days in London. Tranche 2 judging will take place from April 1-11, 2019, with the results announced on May 8.

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### **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

#### **The International Wine Challenge**

In its 36<sup>th</sup> year, the International Wine Challenge is accepted as the world's finest and most meticulously judged competition. The IWC assesses every wine 'blind' and judges each for its faithfulness to style, region and vintage. Each medal-winning

wine is tasted on at least three separate occasions by a minimum of 12 different judges including Masters of Wine. Awards include medals (Gold, Silver, Bronze) and Commended awards. The IWC is committed to helping consumers discover great wine, and the medals displayed on winning bottles offer a trusted guarantee of quality.

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