



CARE AND attention

According to Miles, the lead character in the film *Sideways*, that's what's needed to make a great Pinot Noir. Patrick Schmitt MW finds out how many entries in our Pinot Noir Masters deserve star billing

OF ALL the Global Masters tastings we run – and it's an extensive series covering noble grapes and major wine styles – it is the Pinot Noir competition that yields the greatest range of results. Within the same flight you might find a group of judges either grimacing or grinning, depending on whether the sample had caused great offence or glorious pleasure.

Unlike, say Cabernet Sauvignon, where there are gradations of quality and style, and few failures, Pinot Noir seems a boom-or-bust grape – it either excites with perfume and sweet berry fruit, or severely disappoints with a thin body and unripe aromas.

It's why Miles – the lead character in the Hollywood film *Sideways* – was “so into Pinots”. As he said in the blockbuster movie, which is now more than 10 years old: “It's a hard grape to grow... It's thin-skinned, temperamental... it needs constant care and attention.... And it can only grow in these really specific, little, tucked-away corners of the world.”

But what he didn't mention was Pinot's huge commercial significance, mainly because the demand for this single variety rocketed after this particular film's success. Consequently, those “tucked-away corners” mentioned by Miles have expanded to include pretty much every

About the competition

In a crowded wine-competition arena, *the drinks business* Global pinot noir Masters stands out for its assessment of wines purely by grape variety rather than by region. Divided only by price bracket and, for ease of judging, style too, the blind-tasting format allowed wines to be assessed without prejudice about their country of origin.

The best wines were awarded medals that ranged from Bronze through to Gold, as well as Master, the ultimate accolade, given only to exceptional wines in the tasting.

The wines were judged by a cherry-picked group of Masters of Wine and one Master Sommeliers on 10 February at The Bumpkin in London's South Kensington.

For more detail on the top-scoring wines, including tasting notes, see thedrinksbusiness.com

What did the judges think?



JONATHAN PEDLEY MW

There were fewer 'reductive' wines this time than in the previous two years. In the past I had rationalised this as winemakers going too far in attempting to protect the fragile Pinot Noir from "oxidation". This time, most winemakers seem to have got the "redox" handling right. Oak was also generally well handled. A couple of wines were hideously over-extracted and excessive alcohol was an issue on a few wines.

While a significant proportion of the wines were perfectly correct and balanced, it has to be said that only a handful really sang. This remains the ultimate challenge with Pinot Noir; without the glorious fragrance (I would say the most beautiful in wine) you have a pleasant but rather nondescript light-bodied red wine.

Stylistically, the most interesting talking point among the judges was the acceptability of "green/leafy/sappy" aromas in Pinot Noir. I don't like them at all (almost to the point of seeing them as a fault); but others don't mind them.

New Zealand seemed to perform very strongly, with a good showing from Australia as well. By contrast, Italy and England came out poorly. As usual, Chile was very variable.

major wine region that will allow it. And, as you can see in this year's Pinot Masters results, we've added to our broad list of medal winners with Turkey and Greece: two countries without a long history of nurturing this most prickly of grapes.

But what is it about Pinot that creates such variation in wine quality? After all, it does seem to perform well in a range of soil types, from volcanic to sedimentary. The key is climate – the grape performs poorly in either very cool or hot places. For example, some entries this year that failed to attract high scores were too green and weedy, because they hailed from areas that struggle to fully ripen the grape in weaker vintages. Others that didn't win over the judges were alcoholic and jammy – a result of high

pinot noir masters

White sparkling Pinot Noir

Company	Wine name	Vintage	Region	Country	Medal
£10-£15					
Calatroni	Pinot 64	2012	Lombardy	Italy	Bronze
La Piotta	Mille Bolle d'Oro Brut	2015	Lombardy	Italy	Bronze
£15-£20					
Travaglino	Gran Cuvée – Blanc de Noirs	NV	Lombardy	Italy	Bronze
£20-£30					
Champagne Gremillet	Blanc de Noirs	NV	Champagne	France	Gold
Juvé y Camps	Cava Blanc de Noirs	2012	Penedès	Spain	Silver
Qua Quarini Francesco	Oltrepò Pavese DOCG Pinot Nero Brut 'Classese'	2009	Lombardy	Italy	Bronze
Lyme Bay Winery	Blanc de Noirs	2014	Devon	UK	Bronze
£30-£50					
Champagne Gremillet	Le Millesime	2009	Champagne	France	Gold
£50+					
Guido Berlucchi	Franciacorta Palazzo Lana Extreme	2007	Franciacorta	Italy	Gold

Rosé sparkling Pinot Noir

Company	Wine name	Vintage	Region	Country	Medal
£20-£30					
Bottega	Bottega Rose Gold	2016	Lombardy	Italy	Bronze
£30-£50					
Gusbourne Estate	Twenty Thirteen Gusbourne Rosé	2013	Kent	England	Silver
£50+					
Laurent-Perrier	Cuvée Rosé	NV	Champagne	France	Silver

Still rosé Pinot Noir

Company	Wine name	Vintage	Region	Country	Medal
Lyme Bay Winery	Pinot Noir Rosé	2016	Devon	UK	Bronze

temperatures during the growing season, as well as picking too late.

As Miles also said about making good Pinot: "Only the most patient and nurturing of growers can do it." And that's because it's a grape that needs careful handling in the vineyard – it will punish growers who push yields too high or leave bunches exposed. It's the same in the cellar, where insensitive techniques to extract colour and tannin will produce grainy, unappealing wines.

But, for all the things that can go wrong with Pinot, we are pleased to note a higher proportion of Golds and Masters in this year's competition. Although the

variability in quality is still a hallmark of the Pinot Masters – and winemaking with this grape in general – the overall standard of wine appears to be on the up.

In the past, entries have been criticised for being either too hot (from unbalanced alcohol) or too sweet (from excessive oak). Last year in particular, we reported on the worryingly high number of entries with reductive aromas, ranging from a whiff of burnt rubber to the stink of rotten eggs (Pinot Noir is naturally susceptible to the production of sulphur-like odours).

However, in 2016, very few wines seemed to have a burning sensation from high abvs, while the structure and flavour >



What did the judges think?



RICHARD BAMPFIELD MW

The tasting this year tended to confirm the accepted wisdom on

which areas are well suited to Pinot Noir and which may not be. While I think my only prejudice is against overly extracted Pinot Noir, I did not find much evidence of this. Leanness or extreme vegetal characters were more of a problem.

New Zealand showed very well; both Marlborough and Central Otago. Mornington, Elqui and Limari also showed well. There were excellent examples too from California and Germany. On the other hand, I found that some of the wines from Italy were just too lean. Also, I'm not convinced that Mendoza is natural territory for Pinot Noir. And it was disappointing that the English wines did not show better in this environment – just too lean. Finally, although there were few surprises, I was very pleased to see the quality of the Vajra Pinot Noir from Piedmont.

from oak barrels appeared to have been used to complement rather than smother the fruit. Also, the incidence of reduction in the samples was much lower.

If there were criticisms that seemed common among the judges this year, however, it concerned the structure and body of some of the wines. It was felt that perhaps extraction methods had been too heavy handed on relatively delicate berries. The judges wanted to see more juicy sweet fruit, and fewer firm tannins.

Looking specifically at the medal-winners, like previous years, the Masters show Pinot's versatility, and above all, its ability to make great sparkling wines. Although more commonly blended with Chardonnay, Pinot can, on its own, make

Unoaked red Pinot Noir

Company	Wine name	Vintage	Region	Country	Medal
Under £10					
Calatroni	Flora Vanti	2015	Lombardy	Italy	Bronze
Halewood Romania	La Umbra Pinot Noir	2016	Dealu Mare	Romania	Bronze
Les Grand Chais de France	Zweigniederlassung Oppenau Baron Von Maydells	2014	Baden	Germany	Bronze
Halewood Romania	Waitrose Pinot Noir	2016	Dealurile Munteniei	Romania	Bronze
£10-£15					
Badischer Winzerkeller	Black Forest Pinot Noir	2015	Baden	Germany	Silver
Badischer Winzerkeller	Junge Winzer Spätburgunder Rotwein	2014	Baden	Germany	Bronze
De Bortoli Wines	Villages Pinot Noir	2016	Yarra Valley	Australia	Bronze
Cave Onze Communes	Valle D'Aoste DOC Pinot Noir	2015	Valle d'Aosta	Italy	Bronze
£15-£20					
De Bortoli Wines	Yarra Valley Estate Pinot Noir	2015	Yarra Valley	Australia	Gold
Castello di Luzzano	'Umoro Nero' Pinot Nero dell'Oltrepo Pavese DOC	2015	Lombardy	Italy	Silver
£20-£30					
De Bortoli Wines	Riorret The Abbey	2012	Yarra Valley	Australia	Silver
De Bortoli Wines	PHI Pinot Noir	2013	Yarra Valley	Australia	Silver

Oaked red Pinot Noir

Company	Wine name	Vintage	Region	Country	Medal
Under £10					
Bodegas Trapiche	Oak Cask Pinot Noir	2016	Mendoza	Argentina	Silver
Darwin Vineyards	Curis Valley Pinot Noir Private Reserve	2015	Maule Valley	Chile	Silver
Cramele Recas	Alamina Pinot Noir	2015	Ville Timisului	Romania	Silver
Bodegas Trapiche	Melodías Winemaker Selection Pinot Noir	2016	Mendoza	Argentina	Silver
Maycas del Limari	Maycas Sumaq Pinot Noir	2016	Limari Valley	Chile	Bronze
Zimmermann - Graeff & Müller	Peter & Peter Pinot Noir Trocken	2015	Pfalz	Germany	Bronze
Viña Cono Sur	Bicicleta	2015	Central Valley	Chile	Bronze
Tiki Wine & Vineyards	Nika Tiki Pinot Noir	2014	Marlborough	New Zealand	Bronze
£10-£15					
te Pä Family Vineyards	Pinot Noir	2015	Marlborough	New Zealand	Gold
Bodega Del Fin del Mundo	Malma Finca La Papay Pinot Noir	2015	Neuquen	Argentina	Silver
Colli del Soligo	Levigato Pinot Nero Marca Trevigiana IGT	2014	Veneto	Italy	Silver
Chamlija Wines	Pinot Noir	2014	Kirkclareli Province	Turkey	Silver
Viña Undurraga	Aliwen Pinot Noir	2015	Casablanca	Chile	Silver
Maycas del Limari	Maycas Reserva Especial Pinot Noir	2015	Limari Valley	Chile	Silver
Viña Falemia	Falemia Pinot Noir Reserva	2015	Valle de Elqui	Chile	Silver
Luis Felipe Edwards	Marea Pinot Noir	2014	Leyda Valley	Chile	Bronze
Viña Undurraga	Sibaris Pinot Noir	2014	Leyda	Chile	Bronze
Cembra Cantina Di Montagna	Vigna di Saosent - Pinot Nero Trentino DOC	2014	Trentino	Italy	Bronze
Luis Felipe Edwards	Gran Reserva Family Selection Pinot Noir	2015	Leyda Valley	Chile	Bronze
Bottega Vinai	Bottega Vinai Pinot Nero Trentino DOC	2014	Trentino	Italy	Bronze
Mud House	Central Otago Pinot Noir	2015	Central Otago	New Zealand	Bronze
Scheid Family Wines	Pinot Noir	2014	Monterey	USA	Bronze
Bodegas Trapiche	Estación 1883/Broquel Pinot Noir	2016	Mendoza	Argentina	Bronze
McPherson Wines	MWC Pinot Noir	2015	Victoria	Australia	Bronze
Halewood Romania	Kronos Pinot Noir	2014	Dealu Mare DOC-CMD	Romania	Bronze
Cave Onze Communes	Valle D'Aoste DOC Pinot Noir "Barrique"	2015	Valle D'Aosta	Italy	Bronze
£15-£20					
Viña Concha y Toro	Marques de Casa Concha Pinot Noir	2015	Limari Valley	Chile	Gold
Tiare	Pinuàr	2015	Friuli	Italy	Gold
Wild Rock Wine	Pinot Noir	2015	Marlborough	New Zealand	Gold
Giesen Wines	Ara Select Blocks Pinot Noir	2013	Marlborough	New Zealand	Gold
Viña Cono Sur	20 Barrels	2015	Casablanca	Chile	Gold
Yealands Estate Wine Group	Yealands Estate Single Vineyard Pinot Noir	2015	Marlborough	New Zealand	Gold
Nobilo Wines	Icon Pinot Noir	2014	Marlborough	New Zealand	Gold
Domaine Camus-Bruchon	Bourgogne Pinot Noir	2015	Burgundy	France	Silver
Viña Arboleda	Arboleda	2016	Valle de Aconcagua	Chile	Silver
Viña Undurraga	T.H. Pinot Noir Leyda	2013	Leyda	Chile	Silver
Alpha Estate	Pinot Noir	2013	Florina	Greece	Silver
Jean René Germanier	Pinot Noir Balavaud Velioz Grand Cru	2015	Velioz Valaas	Suisse	Silver
Jackson Family Wines	Carmel Road Monterey Pinot Noir	2014	Monterey	USA	Silver
Jamieson Ranch Vineyards	Reata Three County Pinot Noir	2013	California	USA	Silver
Marisco Vineyards	The Ned Pinot Noir	2015	Marlborough	New Zealand	Silver
te Pa Family Vineyards	te Pä Pinot Noir	2014	Marlborough	New Zealand	Silver



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CHAMLIJA

the art of fine wine

**Chamlija Family Winery
Pinot Noir 2014**

100% Pinot Noir

Vineyard Location: (41.38'25N, 27.36'20E)

Eastern Thrace, Strandja Massif foothills,

300m above sea level, 35km to Black Sea coast

Clones: Côte-d'Or 115, Côte-d'Or 667, Côte-d'Or 777, Côte-d'Or 828

Soil: 65-million-year-old reef limestones and smectite clays, rich in minerals.

August Climate: Average temperature around 21°C, diurnal range 14°C, only two days over 32°C during summer. 4-5m/second NE wind during the hottest part of the day.

Habitat: Surrounded by Strandja forest (oak, beech, cornus mas, hornbeam, juniper trees)

Annual Precipitation: 650mm.

Farming: Dry and Sustainable Certified. Yields are limited to 45hl/ha.

Planting Density: 5,000 vines per hectare, VSP training.

Winemaking: Hand-harvested, five day cold soaking with dry ice, fermented in open tanks and aged in French oak for 10 months.

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delicious fizz, proved by a Pinot Noir specialist such as Champagne's Gremillet in the results – this Aube-based producer gained a Gold for both its entries.

But we shouldn't forget Italy's sparkling winemaking expertise, and the Berlucchi vintage Franciacorta also picked up a Gold, although this was at a higher price point. Meanwhile, when it came to pink fizz, although we didn't award a Gold, the results show that English sparkling sits on a similar quality rung to Champagne, with both Gusbourne and

Laurent-Perrier earning Silver medals.

Moving to the still wines, the relatively low number of unoaked Pinots in the tasting, and comparative lack of top-scoring wines, shows that Pinot performs best when its smooth berry fruit is married to oak, particularly new oak, in varying proportions depending on the wine. Nevertheless, De Bortoli showed that it's possible to create a top-scoring Pinot without any oak influence.

The under-£10 category is another area of the Pinot masters with relatively few

entries and top scores, although the four silver medallists this year showed that it is possible to craft an appealing wine from Pinot Noir at low prices (in the past, we have been tempted to suggest Pinot lovers switch to Gamay or Grenache when they need to buy wine on a budget).

Scanning over the results among wines priced over £10 but under £20, it is clear how

Scanning over the results among wines price over £10 but under £20, it is clear how Marlborough is becoming a place for good-quality keenly priced Pinot Noir, despite this region's much stronger reputation for Sauvignon Blanc



Marlborough is becoming a place for good-quality keenly priced Pinot Noir, despite this region's much stronger reputation for Sauvignon Blanc. While New Zealand's Central Otago may have the more premium image for Pinot, and produces darker more concentrated styles, the southerly region rarely produces examples at sub-£20 retail prices.

And £15-£20 seems a particular sweet spot for Pinot Noir from both New

pinot noir masters

What did the judges think?



PATRICIA STEFANOWICZ MW

The wines submitted in 2017 were a more consistent, and generally more delicious group

than in 2016.

What I liked most was the generally high quality and balance of flavour, acidity and oak at every price range. Perhaps the under-£10 wines were a little weak, but most had an aromatic Pinot Noir nose. As expected, the stars were the expensive oaked Pinot Noirs (£30+). The delight is that these flagships come from many countries.

The wines from lesser-known areas, such as Friuli, Switzerland and Germany can certainly compete with more established regions of Oregon, cool Australia and California, or New Zealand.

Unoaked Pinot Noir seems almost pointless. Although sound, the wines lack mid-palate flavour, supple texture and breadth. Whole-berry or whole bunch fermentation just doesn't give the weight and richness. Why not make excellent Gamay Noir instead?

It is always a disappointment not to see more Burgundies at different levels of quality. Understandable, of course, as Burgundy doesn't necessarily have to promote its wines through blind-tasting.

The surprises on the day were a couple of lovely wines from unexpected sources-Turkey and Greece. Long may these little gems continue!

Zealand and Chile, with the latter country proving it's now a serious player when it comes to this grape, with the now fully mature vineyards of Casablanca, and maturing sites of Limari definitely places for great and good-value Pinot Noir from Chile.

Between £20 and £30, it was Australia that really stood out this year. Interestingly, the top performers in this

Oaked red Pinot Noir (cont.)

Company	Wine name	Vintage	Region	Country	Medal
Nitida	Pinot Noir	2015	Durbanville	South Africa	Bronze
Abbotts & Delaunay	Domaine de la Métairie d'Alon, La Métairie	2015	Languedoc	France	Bronze
Quaquerini Francesco	Oltrepò Pavese DOC Pinot Nero 'Blav'	2013	Lombardy	Italy	Bronze
Marisco Vineyards	The King's Wrath Pinot Noir	2015	Marlborough	New Zealand	Bronze
te Pa Family Vineyards	Pa Road Pinot Noir	2014	Marlborough	New Zealand	Bronze
De Grendel Wines	OP die Berg Pinot Noir	2013	Ceres Plateau	South Africa	Bronze
Abbotts & Delaunay	Domaine de la Métairie d'Alon Pinot Noir Solaire	2014	Languedoc	France	Bronze
Scheid Family Wines	Pinot Noir – District 7	2014	Monterey	USA	Bronze
Abbotts & Delaunay	Domaine de la Métairie d'Alon, Solaire	2015	Languedoc	France	Bronze
Château de Santenay	Bourgogne Vieilles Vignes	2015	Burgundy	France	Bronze
£20-£30					
Tapanappa	Fleurieu Peninsula Pinot Noir	2015	Southern Fleurieu	Australia	Master
Burch Family Wines	Marchand & Burch Pinot Noir	2015	Mount Barker/ Porogurup	Australia	Gold
Loveblock	Pinot Noir	2014	Central Otago	New Zealand	Gold
Falcon Ridge Estate	Pinot Noir	2015	Nelson	New Zealand	Gold
Rockburn Vineyard	Central Otago Pinot Noir	2015	Central Otago	New Zealand	Gold
Jackson Family Wines	La Crema Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir	2014	Sonoma Coast	USA	Gold
Tolosa	Heritage Pinot Noir	2015	Edna Valley	USA	Gold
Matahiwi Vineyard	Holly Pinot Noir	2015	Marlborough	New Zealand	Gold
Giesen Wines	The Brothers Pinot Noir	2013	Marlborough	New Zealand	Gold
Jackson Family Wines	Cambria Estate Vineyard and Winery Benchbreak	2014	Santa Maria Valley	USA	Gold
Château de Santenay	Mercreury Vieilles Vignes	2015	Burgundy	France	Silver
Weingut Mario J. Burkhart	Rarus Noir 2. Gewächs Blauer Spätburgunder	2010	Baden	Germany	Silver
Kellerei Meran Burggräfler	Blauburgunder Zeno Riserva	2014	Alto Adige	Italy	Silver
Hush Heath Manor	Hush Heath Manor Pinot Noir	2015	Kent	UK	Silver
Whalehaven Winery	Conservation Coast Pinot Noir	2014	Upper Hemel-en-Aarde Valley	South Africa	Silver
Averill Creek Vineyard	Vineyard Somenos Series	2014	Vancouver Island	Canada	Silver
Kim Crawford Wines	Small Parcel 'Rise & Shine' Pinot Noir	2015	Central Otago	New Zealand	Silver
Australian Vintage	Nepenthe 'The Good Doctor' Pinot Noir	2015	Adelaide Hills	Australia	Silver
Weingut Fritz Waßner	Spätburgunder Alte Reben	2013	Baden	Germany	Silver
Cantina Terlano	Monticol Alto Adige Pinot Noir Riserva	2014	Alto Adige	Italy	Silver
G.D. Varja di Vaira Aldo	Langhe DOC Pinot Nero	2014	Piedmonte	Italy	Silver
Bar Z Winery	L'efflorescence Pinot Noir	2014	Texas High Plains	USA	Bronze
Château de Santenay	Mercreury 1er Cru les Puisselets	2015	Burgundy	France	Bronze
Weingut Mario J. Burkhart	Rarus Noir 1. Gewächs Ft Blauer Spätburgunder Trocken	2014	Baden	Germany	Bronze
Cantina Terlano	Anraro Alto Adige Pinot Noir Riserva	2013	Alto Adige	Italy	Bronze
Rockburn Vineyard	Central Otago Pinot Noir	2014	Central Otago	New Zealand	Bronze
Jackson Family Wines	Kendall-Jackson Vintners Reserve Pinot Noir	2014	California	USA	Bronze
Mud House	Single Vineyard Claim 431 Pinot Noir	2014	Central Otago	New Zealand	Bronze
Bar Z Winery	L'efflorescence Pinot Noir	2016	Texas High Plains	USA	Bronze

price band weren't from the country's most famous places for Pinot: Mornington Peninsula, Geelong or the Yarra. Rather, we had Tapanappa gain the most keenly-priced Master of the day for its Pinot from the Southern Fleurieu Peninsula, closely followed by Burch family for its example from Porongurup in Western Australia's Margaret River.

At these prices the US showed its aptitude for crafting great Pinot, particularly from California's Sonoma Coast, along with Edna and Santa Maria valleys.

Over £30, and Oregon also featured from the US, with Angela Estate picking up a silver and a Master for its wines from the Yamhill-Carlton AVA, along with



same region's Eola Amity Hills AVA, where Ste Michelle Wine Estates is crafting Gold-medal winning Pinot from the Willakia Vineyard. At these higher prices, with a Gold medal for Giesen and Marisco Vineyards, it was apparent that Marlborough can craft top-end wines to

pinot noir masters



The judges (l-r): Jonathan Pedley MW; Clive Barlow MW; Richard Bampffield MW; Michelle Cherutti-Kowal MW; Will Heslop; Patricia Stefanowicz MW; Michael Palij MW; Patrick Schmitt MW; José Gonzalez Godoy; Matthew Forster MW

rival other great Pinot-producing regions, including the more famous source of great Pinot from New Zealand, Central Otago. Although it was this latter area that took home the only Master in the £30-£50 price band, which was awarded to the China Girl Pinot from Central Otago's Crown Range Cellar, while Hawkesbury Estates Atkitu A1 from the same region got a Gold.

AUSTRALIAN PROWESS

Australia also showed its Pinot prowess, with Tapanappa's top expression from its Foggy Hill vineyard picking up a Gold, along with Shawdowfax for its Little Hampton Pinot from the Macedon Ranges and, the pricier Moorooduc McIntyre Pinot from Mornington Peninsula.

Among our final flights for the priciest wines of the day, and within the US, the judges were (like last year) very impressed by the wines from Edna Valley's Tolosa, which makes rich, ripe but deliciously perfumed Pinots, along with lovely wines from the Mira winery, using fruit from the much sought-after Hyde vineyard in Napa. Elsewhere, South Africa's Bouchard Finlayson proved a standout, along with Switzerland's Jean Remé Germanier, which makes wonderful Pinot Noir from the Valais.

Oaked red Pinot Noir (cont.)

Company	Wine name	Vintage	Region	Country	Medal
£30-£50					
Crown Range Cellar	China Girl Pinot Noir	2015	Central Otago	New Zealand	Master
Shawdowfax Winery	Little Hampton Pinot Noir	2015	Macedon Ranges	Australia	Gold
Tapanappa	Foggy Hill Vineyard Pinot Noir	2014	Southern Fleurieu	Australia	Gold
Giesen Wines	Clayvin Single Vineyard Selection	2014	Marlborough	New Zealand	Gold
Ste. Michelle Wine Estates	Willakia Vineyard Pinot Noir	2014	Eola-Amity Hills	United States	Gold
Hawkesbury Estates	Akitu A1	2015	Central Otago	New Zealand	Gold
Château de Santenay	Aloxe-Corton les Brunettes et Planchots	2015	Burgundy	France	Silver
Château de Santenay	Beaune 1er Cru Montée Rouge	2015	Burgundy	France	Silver
Castelfeder Winery	Alto Adige Riserva DOC 'Burgum Novum'	2013	Trentino	Italy	Silver
Mira Winery	Pinot Noir Stanly Ranch	2013	Napa Valley	USA	Silver
Giesen Wines	Ridge Block Single Vineyard Selection Pinot Noir	2014	Marlborough	New Zealand	Silver
Lowburn Ferry Wines	Home Block Pinot Noir	2015	Central Otago	New Zealand	Silver
Jamieson Ranch Vineyards	Reata Rosella's Vineyard Pinot Noir	2014	California	USA	Silver
Angela Estate Winery	'Angela Vineyard' Pinot Noir	2013	Yamhill-Carlton	USA	Silver
Château de Santenay	Aloxe-Corton les Brunettes et Planchots	2015	Burgundy	France	Silver
Weingut Leitz	Spätburgunder Geisenheimer Rothenberg	2010	Rheingau	Germany	Silver
Jackson Family Wines	Gran Moraine Carlton Oregon	2013	Yamhill-Carlton	USA	Silver
Viña Cono Sur	Ocio	2014	Casablanca	Chile	Bronze
Weingut Fritz Waßner	Spätburgunder XXL	2014	Baden	Germany	Bronze
Château de Santenay	Beaune 1er Cru Clos du Roi	2015	Burgundy	France	Bronze
Over £50					
Château de Pommard	Clos Marey-Monge	2013	Burgundy	France	Master
Angela Estate Winery	Angela Estate 'Abbott Claim' Pinot Noir	2013	Yamhill-Carlton	USA	Master
Château de Pommard	Clos Marey-Monge	2014	Burgundy	France	Master
Tolosa	1772 Pinot Noir	2015	Edna Valley	USA	Master
Marisco Vineyards	The Journey Pinot Noir	2013	Marlborough	New Zealand	Gold
Tolosa	Hollister Pinot Noir	2015	Edna Valley	USA	Gold
Tolosa	Stone Lion Pinot Noir	2015	Edna Valley	USA	Gold
Bouchard Finlayson	Tête de Cuvée Pinot Noir	2013	Walker Bay	South Africa	Gold
Jean René Germanier	Pinot Noir Venthône 'Lapon' AOC Valais	2013	Valais	Suisse	Gold
Mira Winery	Pinot Noir Hyde	2013	Napa Valley	USA	Gold
Crown Range Cellar	Signature Series Grant Taylor Pinot Noir	2015	Central Otago	New Zealand	Gold
Moorooduc Estate	The Moorooduc McIntyre Pinot Noir	2014	Mornington Pen.	Australia	Gold
Tolosa	Primera Pinot Noir	2015	Edna Valley	USA	Silver

Of course, no report on the world's great Pinot Noirs would be complete without mentioning Burgundy, and it was pleasing to see that where the region did compete, it scored well, with two wines from Château de Pommard proving among the six Master winners in total for this year's tasting.

In all, 2016's Pinot Masters had proved that the wine world is right to get excited

about certain tucked-away corners for this grape, whether it's the Côte d'Or in Burgundy, Limari in Chile, Central Otago in New Zealand or parts of Oregon and California, Australia and South Africa. It had also shown that there are plenty of other places producing first-rate examples from this difficult grape, and from a broad sweep of countries, taking in England, Switzerland, Turkey and Greece.

Within the US, the judges were (like last year) very impressed by the wines from Edna Valley's Tolosa, which makes rich, ripe but deliciously perfumed Pinots, along with lovely wines from the Mira winery

While such samples were stylistically diverse, when it came to quality, there were similarly high – and, with the competition's aim to sample wines without prejudice about their source, it is quality first and foremost that the Pinot Masters exists to reward. db