



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 | Kirkklareli 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 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).

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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 |
| Quaquarini 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 |
| Scheidt 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 | Mercurey 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 | Mercurey 1er Cru les Puillets | 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.

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

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