



# New Zealand Organic Wine Awards

## 2017 Results

# Welcome

After a successful debut in 2014, the New Zealand Organic Wine Awards has grown from strength to strength, both in terms of numbers of wines entered, and also media exposure resulting from these awards. The awards, now in their fourth year have matured into a recognized, fully independent award.

The Organic Wine Awards is founded upon the belief that above all else, producing a wine organically, gives the winemaker the potential to create a superior wine. Other well publicized benefits come in the form of health concerns from lower sulfites found in organic wine, environmental issues such as no toxic spraying. The Organic Wine Awards are not affiliated with NZ Wine or Organic Wine NZ, however we do look to them for guidance, advice and whole heartedly support their endeavours to support and promote organic vineyards throughout NZ.

NZ has many well respected wine shows and competitions, including the Air New Zealand Wine Awards, New World Wine Awards, NZ International Wine Show, among many other local and regional wine shows. However the 'New Zealand Organic Wine Awards' is the first NZ based award to focus exclusively on certified organic wine.

Our goal is to increase the market share of organic wine within New Zealand, and help consumers to easily identify and select a quality organic wine. Through the use of our website we also help consumers connect directly with vineyards or stockists to purchase award winning wine.

Judging was completed over four varietal based tasting sessions throughout April and May 2017. All judging is completed blind by a static, hand selected team of local experts, wine enthusiasts and consumer specialists. The panel is completely independent, with none of the judges having a vested interest in any of the vineyards partaking in the award ceremony, judges have signed a conflict of interest document to this effect. Transparency is one our core beliefs central to the ethos of the organic wine awards.

Wine's were judged on a variety of factors encompassing appearance, aroma and taste and awarded points for each. Based on the points score for each wine, wines above a points 'threshold' are assigned a 'medal', either gold, silver or bronze. Which can be displayed by the vineyard on the bottle in the form of a sticker, or used in marketing material in connection with the awarded wine. Awards media is available to winning vineyards at no cost, and can be printed at a supplier of their choice under a 'no cost license'.

Throughout the coming months full tasting notes for awarded wines will be made available on our website, along with full results list. We are also working on a GeoSpatial map showing the vineyard locations and coverage of Organic wine in NZ, we hope to launch this towards the end of 2017.

Once again, congratulations to all of the winners of this years NZ Organic Wine Awards, whilst the awards grow every year it is hard not to be impressed by the standard of wines entered and the constant positive progression in which the NZ Organic Wine market is taking.

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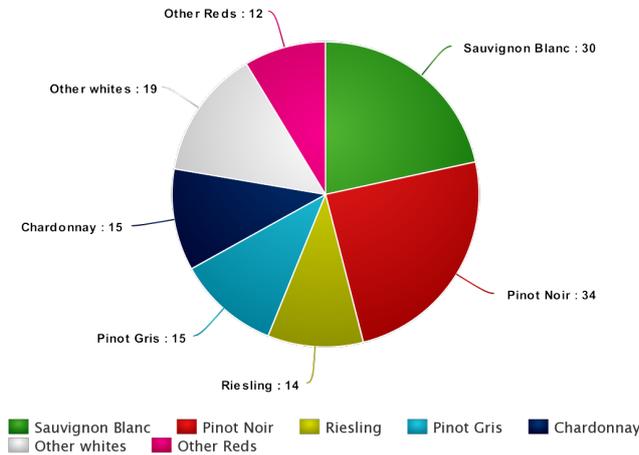


# Observations

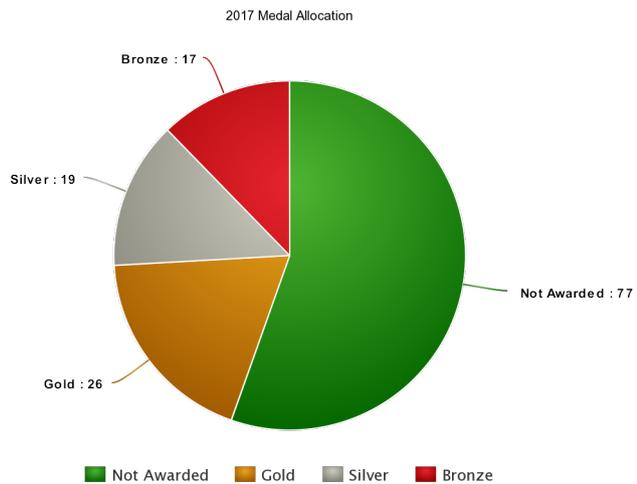
For 2017 we had 139 wines entered from 28 NZ based organic wineries. This represents a slight increase in participating vineyards from last year, but predominantly from existing vineyards submitting more varietals for judging. This is in part due to more of the wineries supplying vineyards becoming organic certified, or a favourable growing season allowing the winery to source all of their grapes from organic vineyards without needing to blend with non-organic grown grapes. The increasing presence of the award may also be prompting vineyards to submit more wine for judging.

One or two vineyards decided not to compete in the awards this year, the majority of feedback surrounding this was the judging criteria surrounding skin contact wines, which vineyards had hoped our less formal

judging criterion would be more favorable upon than many other NZ based awards. Unfortunately our 'less traditional' judging approach has still struggled to fairly judge skin contact wines. I believe this is partially due to how the wines perform in a line up, directly competing with wines created using a more standard technique. This is something we sought external advice on for this years awards, and judged skin contact wines as a separate varietal- although unfortunately we had very few 'orange wines' submitted to this years awards.



The spread of varietals entered for 2017 was somewhat different to previous vintages. For the first time in the awards history the number of Pinot Noirs submitted has exceeded the number of Sauvignon Blanc's, with 34 and 30 respectively. Despite Sauvignon Blanc being NZ's primary wine product, we believe the number of organic Pinot Noirs to be unproportionally high. This could be due to the varietal responding particularly well to organic growing conditions- or more likely that the perceived increased cost in producing organic wine is better offset by a higher cost output such as Pinot Noir (vs Sauvignon Blanc). We also saw a far higher number of Chardonnay's entered in 2017 than previous years, this follows the trend as the varietal regains favor with both domestic and international consumers.



Of the 139 wines entered, 62 wines were awarded a medal. The distribution of wines is displayed in the adjacent diagram. Despite a large portion of wines not being awarded a medal, judges agreed that the general standard was exceptional. The awards set out to find the best organic wines available and award these a medal based on our judging panels criteria. As always the threshold for medals is set high to ensure that when consumers see the 'Organic Wine Awards' medal, they can be assured of a high quality wine.

Other observational included the notation that many vineyards producing 'Oaked/Barrel fermented' Sauvignon Blanc's are moving towards noting this style of wine-making on the label, either by stating the varietal as a 'barrel fermented Sauvignon Blanc' or detailing the wine making process on the rear label. As stated in the 2016 observations, we support this improved labeling as an improved consumer aid when selecting a wine to best suit their tastes.

# Results

## **NZ Organic Wine Awards Wine of the Show: Quartz Reef Bendigo Estate Pinot Noir 2014**

The 2017 "Wine of the Show" is the Quartz Reef Bendigo Estate Pinot Noir. Despite the competition being incredibly tight our judges agreed that the Bendigo Pinot Noir was something special. Rudi Bauer has crafted a bold, powerful, yet intricately clever wine that stood out amongst this years impressive line up on Pinot Noir's. Well worthy of wine of the show in 2014, although we can't wait to see how this cellars over the next 6-10 years.

## **NZ Organic Wine Awards Sustainable Vineyard of the Year: Urlar**

Urlar have been a solid fixture of the awards since our inception- and each year their wines deliver. They have been an early adopter of the organic growing techniques within NZ, but continue to refine and develop their sustainable practices. This has recently included undertaking Biodynamic certification, implementing a steam cleaning process for barrels which results in a water usage reduction of 30,000 litres per year.

## **NZ Organic Wine Awards Vineyard of the Year: Black Estate**

For the past two vintages (of which Black Estate has only been eligible to enter) Black Estate's wines have caused more discussion amongst our judges than any other wines, often leading to rather late nights on more than one occasion. Their wines are all sophisticatedly exclusive, from their four varietal Rose blend to their three unique Pinot Noir's. Each wine they produce adds complexity and depth beyond what you expect, when you think you have a complete understanding of the wine another layer unfolds and adds to the intrigue. Black Estate achieved more Gold and Silver medals than any other vineyard partaking in the 2017 awards.



## **Gold**

The following wines have been awarded the highest accolades available for 2017.

The Darling Sauvignon Blanc 2016  
Greystone Sauvignon Blanc 2016  
Urlar Select Parcels Sauvignon Blanc 2016  
Loveblock Sauvignon Blanc 2016  
Konrad Sauvignon Blanc 2016  
Odyssey Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2016  
Richmond Plains Sauvignon Blanc 2016  
Quartz Reef Methode Traditionnelle 2012  
Terrace Edge Rose 2016  
Richmond Plains Blanc de Noir 2016  
Bellbird Spring Dry Pinot Gris 2016  
Black Estate Home Rose 2016  
The Darling Pinot Gris 2016  
Greystone Pinot Gris 2016  
Terrace Edge "Liquid Geography" Riesling 2016  
Terrace Edge "Classic" Riesling 2016  
Muddy Water James Hardwick 2015  
Muddy Water Chardonnay 2015  
Richmond Plains Chardonnay 2015  
Quartz Reef Bendigo Estate Pinot Noir 2014  
Muddy Water Hare's Breath Pinot Noir 2014  
Muddy Water Slowhand Pinot Noir 2013  
Black Estate Home Pinot Noir 2015  
Black Estate Damsteep Pinot Noir 2015  
Terrace Edge 2015 Syrah 2015  
Turanga Creek Notre Terroir Merlot Malbec 2014



### **Silver**

The following wines have been awarded a 2017 Silver Medal.

Babich Family Estates Headwaters Organic Sauvignon 2016  
Giesen Organic Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2015  
Kaimira Estate Brightwater Sauvignon Blanc 2016  
Te Mania Sauvignon Blanc 2016  
Urlar Sauvignon Blanc 2016  
Quartz Reef Methode Traditionnelle Brut NV  
Loveblock Gewurztraminer 2014  
TOSQ Pinot Noir Rosé 2016  
Richmond Plains Pinot Gris 2016  
Black Estate Damsteep Riesling 2016  
Kaimira Estate Iti Selection Riesling 2015  
Sunset Valley Vineyard Chardonnay Reserve 2015  
Black Estate Home Chardonnay 2016  
The Darling Chardonnay 2013  
Babich Family Estates Headwaters Organic Chardonnay 2016  
Black Estate Netherwood Pinot Noir 2015  
Odyssey Marlborough Pinot Noir 2015  
Villa Maria Single Vineyard The Attorney Organic Marlborough Pinot Noir 2014  
Urlar Noble Riesling 2016



### **Bronze**

The following wines have been awarded a 2017 Bronze Medal.

Villa Maria Cellar Selection Organic Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2016  
Walnut Block Collectables Sauvignon Blanc 2016  
The Pruners Reward Sauvignon Blanc 2016  
Urlar Pinot Gris 2015  
Quartz Reef Pinot Gris 2015  
Babich Family Estates Headwaters Organic Gruner Veltliner 2016  
Kaimira Estate Brightwater Gewurtzraminer 2016  
Babich Family Estates Headwaters Organic Albarino 2016  
Turanga Creek Le Pur Pinot Gris 2015  
Konrad Dry Riesling 2016  
Greystone Omihi Pinot Noir 2014  
Sunset Valley Pinot Noir Reserve 2015  
Muddy Water Pinot Noir 2014  
Konrad Pinot Noir 2015  
Richmond Plains Syrah 2015  
Urlar Riesling 2016  
Momo Rose 2016



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