



New Zealand Organic Wine Awards

2016 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 third year have matured into a recognized, fully independent award.

The Organic Wine Award 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.

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 three varietal based tastings throughout May 2016. The first was Sauvignon Blanc, the second was Aromatics, and the final judging was Pinot Noir and 'other reds'. All judging is completed blind by a static, hand selected team of local experts including chefs, organic specialists, wine retailers and a winemaker. 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.

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. Stickers are available to purchase directly from our suppliers with no markup, or alternatively media files can be supplied free of charge, for printing by a vineyards chosen supplier.

The NZ Organic Wine Awards are dedicated to promoting sustainable viticulture, last year we introduced the NZ Organic Wine Awards Sustainable Vineyard of the Year award, which was won by Kaimira Estate in the debut season, details of which can be found on our website. We have once again decided on a vineyard for this award for 2016, which can be found in the results.

Throughout the coming months tasting notes will be made available on our website, along with full results list.

Congratulations to all partaking vineyards (and those organic vineyards not competing), I truly believe that NZ is currently producing some of the very top organic wines in the world at the moment, which is something the NZ Wine community should be very proud of.

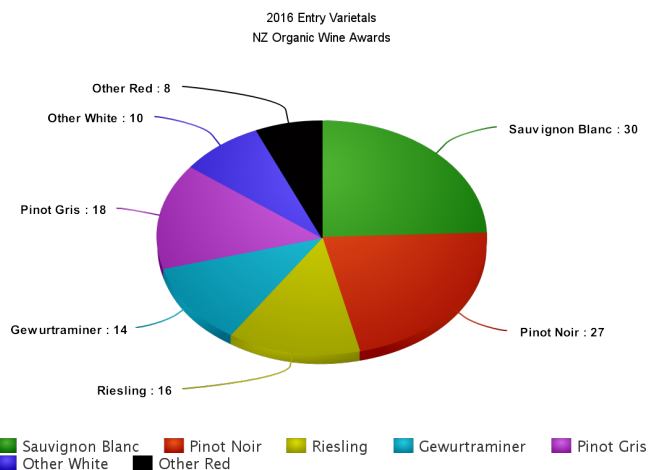
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Observations

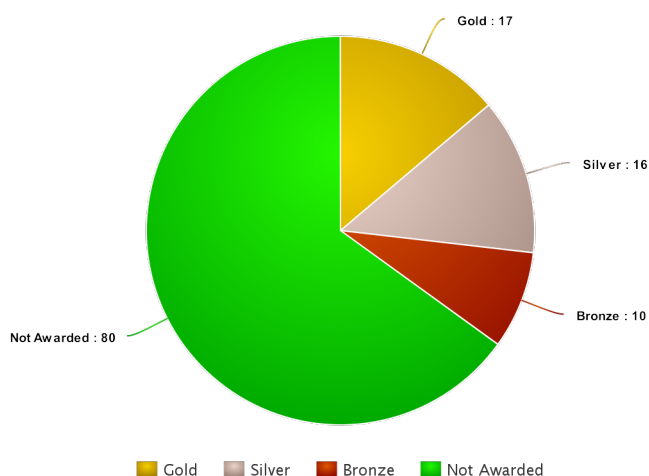
For 2016 we had a total of 123 certified organic wines entered from 28 vineyards. This is a growth on 2015 in terms of number of wines entered, and also the number of participating vineyards. This is largely due to new vineyards becoming organically certified and eligible to partake in the awards.

It is worth noting that a small number of vineyards involved with last years event either submitted a lower number of wines, or didn't submit at all, due to having to source grapes from 'non certified' vineyards this vintage. This was attributed to either bad growing conditions including frost, or disease during the 2015 growing season.



The spread of varietals entered is shown in the diagram. Once again Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Noir are the largest category, with a combined total of nearly 50% of the wines entered. The biggest growth in varietal year on year was 'Pinot Gris', in which entry numbers doubled when compared to the 2015 awards. Riesling and Gewürztraminer entries are also proportionally increased from last year. This represents a increased diversification of varietals found in the NZ Organic wine market- which has traditionally been very focused on Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Noir.

Of the 123 wines entered, 43 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. The threshold for medals was set high to ensure that when consumers see the 'Organic Wine Awards' logo, they can be assured of a high quality wine.



Other general observations that were commented upon by our judging team, included changes in trends and wine-making processes. 'Skin contact' or 'skin fermented' wine was entered to the awards for the first time this year by four separate vineyards. Whilst the judges unanimously appreciated the unique aspects of the wine, including increased complexity, when tasted as part of a varietal line up they rarely scored as well as anticipated. This is likely to be due to shortcomings in the judging process, which judges in varietal categories, for which skin fermented wines sit on the fringe of. This will be investigated and addressed before the next awards.

Another trend that has been increasing over the past few vintages has been 'barrel fermenting' or 'barrel aging' of wines not traditionally placed in oak (such as Sauvignon Blanc or Pinot Gris). This aging or fermenting generates secondary characteristics not found within a typical wine of the varietal. These wines tend to perform highly when judged, especially in greater layers of complexity- and at times, the intensity of the aroma. It is worth noting that members of our panel, including a retailer, commented that barrel aged or fermented wines should be advertised as such to avoid consumer confusion, as they commonly taste significantly different to a typical varietal wine, and may not be what the consumer had in mind when they selected their choice of bottle.

Results

NZ Organic Wine Awards Wine of the Show: Terrace Edge 2014 Liquid Geography

The 2016 "Wine of the Show" is the Terrace Edge 2014 Liquid Geography. This wine caught the attention of our judging panel, creating in-depth discussion amongst the panel members, despite being an extremely close decision the Liquid Geography is our top pick for 2016. We are extremely pleased to have a wine that retails for sub \$20 to be awarded this accolade, proving that a world class organic Riesling is within reach of the average wine consumer.

NZ Organic Wine Awards Sustainable Vineyard of the Year: Loveblock

Loveblock have claimed the prestigious title of the "NZ Sustainable Vineyard of the Year" for 2016. Vineyard owners Kim and Erica Crawford have gone above and beyond existing sustainable vineyard standards in some testing environments for their new winery "Loveblock". Their efforts include solar power, on-site compost creation (using grape marc, mussel shell, seaweed, cow manure, vineyard cuttings etc). The vineyard is also managed to US NOP standards, whilst increasing costs on the vineyard this also allows Loveblock to export 'Organic' labeled wine to the US market. In addition to this Loveblock also runs an Organic Beef Cattle farm at the vineyard site, utilizing sabbatical years for pasture land to ensure minimal environmental impact.

NZ Organic Wine Awards Vineyard of the Year: Greystone

Greystone is our 2016 Vineyard of the Year, claiming three 'Gold medals' in their debut season partaking in the awards, as well as an additional gold from Muddy Water, who share the same owners. The general standard of wine created by this Waipara Valley vineyard has been outstanding, a true testament to the region, and to winemaker Dominic Maxwell and viticulturist Nick Gill.



Gold

The following wines have been awarded the highest accolades available.

Greystone 2015 Riesling
Black Estate 2015 Damsteep Riesling
Terrace Edge 2014 Liquid Geography Riesling
Urlar 2015 Noble Riesling
Greystone 2015 Gewurztraminer
Greystone 2015 Pinot Gris
Quartz Reef 2014 Pinot Gris
The Darling 2013 Chardonnay
The Darling 2015 Sauvignon Blanc
Villa Maria 2015 Single Vineyard Templar Organic Sauvignon Blanc
Kaimira Estate 2015 Sauvignon Blanc
Black Estate 2015 Netherwood Rose
Richmond Plains 2015 Blanc de Noir
Hans Hertzog Estate 2012 Tempranillo
Muddy Water 2014 Pinot Noir
Villa Maria 2013 Single Vineyard The Attorney Organic Pinot Noir
Babich Family Estates 2014 Headwaters Organic Pinot Noir



Silver

The following wines have been awarded a 2016 Silver Medal.

Urlar 2014 Riesling
Greenhough Hope Vineyard 2013 Riesling
Loveblock 2014 Gewürztraminer
Huia 2015 Gewürztraminer
Odyssey 2015 Pinot Gris
Greystone 2015 Sand Dollar Pinot Gris
Hans Herzog 2015 Estate Pinot Gris
Black Estate 2015 Home Chardonnay
Huia Chardonnay 2014
Supernatural Wine Co. 2014 Green Glow (Skin Fermented Sauvignon Blanc)
Greenhough 2015 Hope Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc
Yealands Estate 2015 Single Block M2 Organic Sauvignon Blanc
Quartz Reef NV Methode Traditionelle Brut
Richmond Plains 2014 Pinot Noir
Te Mania 2013 Reserve Pinot Noir
Soderberg 2014 Home Block, Single Vineyard Pinot Noir



Bronze

The following wines have been awarded a 2016 Bronze Medal.

Kaimira Estate 2015 Riesling ITI Selection
Kaimira Estate 2015 Gewürztraminer
Huia 2013 Pinot Gris
Babich Family Estates 2015 Headwaters Organic Chardonnay
Sunset Valley Vineyard 2015 Chardonnay Reserve
Walnut Block 2015 Nutcracker Sauvignon Blanc
Loveblock 2014 Sauvignon Blanc
Te Mania 2014 Reserve Pinot Noir
The Darling 2013 Pinot Noir
Seresin Estate 2014 Pinot Noir



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