

WINE News

A wealth of wines from Oz, NZ and SA.



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Explore the Other Side of New World Wine

By Stefanie Juelsgaard

The Commonwealth nations of New Zealand, Australia and South Africa are all considered “New World,” and though many of their viticultural regions are just finding their foothold in the world wine market, they are producing wines of great character and sense of place. Stagnation is not a term apposite to these appellations, and I am so excited by the number of new and intriguing wines now appearing. Not bound by government regulation, wineries are experimenting with varietals and farming practices and discovering how to channel these

methods into something delicious. They are also leading the world in protecting the way of life they love most. They are pioneering organic and biodynamic farming practices, addressing climate change early, and making sure what they are doing now can still be done in 1,000 years. Conventional food pairing rules are also going out the window, with Sauvignon Blanc proving a stunning companion to steak. There is so much variety to be had in each of these unique and vastly different countries, that it is time for every wine lover to start exploring.

2017 Tania & Vincent Carême “Terre Brulée”

Chenin Blanc Swartland (\$12.99) Vincent Carême makes Chenin Blanc in Loire that can run \$30–\$40, but we are able to offer his stunning South Africa bottling for a fraction of that price. The Swartland is already the most enthralling wine region in South Africa right now, but throw in the expertise of a respected Vouvray producer and you have a winning combination. This is a complex wine with honeysuckle meeting granite notes combined with bright orange blossom and lemon rind. **91 WS, 90 W&S**



2016 Silkman Sémillon Hunter Valley

New South Wales (\$19.99) One of the most exciting wines coming out of Australia today is a 100% Sémillon made by Liz Silkman, who was named 2016 Winemaker of the Year at the Hunter Valley Legends awards. Precise, driven acidity and wet stone combine with grapefruit and Meyer lemon to make this steely, fresh, expressive wine. Light-bodied and incredibly refreshing, this is truly site-driven and not an expression of the varietal you will find elsewhere. **95 JH, 91 JS, 91 RP**



2017 TED by Mount Edward Central Otago

Pinot Noir (\$19.99) “Ted,” the nickname for Edward, is meant to be a younger brother to the single vineyard Mount Edward wines. Recently named on James Suckling’s Top 100 New Zealand Wines of 2018, this fresh, drink-young take on Pinot Noir is a staff favorite. Completely destemmed to remove heavy tannin, this holds more mid-palate weight and juicy, lively fruits. Central Otago wines are taking off—the continental climate creates the perfect niche for them in this southernmost winegrowing region. **93 JS**





Sweet as Riesling: Actually, Mount Edward winemaker Duncan Forsyth makes a fine Riesling that's just off-dry.

The Voice of Riesling

When our customers think about the acclaimed varietal wines coming out of Australia and New Zealand, Riesling may not be the first one that comes to mind. Luckily for us, a surge in popularity and ideal growing conditions means these two countries are putting forth some truly phenomenal examples of the grape, ranging from bone dry to sticky sweet. Eden Valley and Victoria in Australia are dominating the Riesling game, aided by cool growing sites and higher mountain elevations. Marlborough, Central Otago and North Canterbury are all strong Riesling regions in New Zealand, with each bringing a unique microclimate and terroir to the varietal. It is the perfect time to familiarize yourself with Rieslings from these two trailblazing countries, as there are more styles and beautiful examples being produced now than ever.

2017 Best's Great Western Riesling (\$19.99) Best's was one of the first wineries in Australia to plant Riesling grapes, with the first vineyard being established in the 1860s. Floral notes and citrus (particularly Meyer lemon and lime) dominate with a rich mouthfeel helping to add length and roundness to the acidity. The great tone of minerality from the mountain-grown fruit gives depth and shows this wine could hold its own for many years to come. **95 JH, 93 JS**

2017 Hentley Farm Riesling Eden Valley Australia (\$19.99) From founder Keith Henschke, a member of one of the most highly respected families in Barossa winemaking, this gorgeous Riesling is grown in the cooler climate site of Eden Valley. Vineyard sites planted in the late 1970s and early 1980s, with underlying granite soils, provide the wine's classic characteristics of tropical fruit and citrus. **94 JH, 93 JS, 90 VN, 90 WE**

2017 Framingham "Select" Riesling Marlborough (\$19.99) While Framingham makes a few other varietals, Riesling is where they really shine. The 2017 vintage was a tough one in Marlborough,



but winemaker Andrew Hedley took full advantage of the dumping rain and made the entire Prädikatswein of Riesling, ranging from trocken to trockenbeerenauslese. This Select is one my favorites, sitting in the middle at a spätlese level and the perfect pairing for Thai food. **96 BC, 95 RC, 92 JS**

2015 Mt. Beautiful Riesling North Canterbury (\$14.99) Lauded by many critics as one of the most underrated growing sites in New Zealand, North Canterbury is catching up and bottling up some absolutely beautiful wines. Riesling is the first varietal that Mt. Beautiful grew and released to the public, so not only have they had years to perfect it, but it holds a special place in their heart. A little weightier and denser than the others on the list; orchard and tropical fruits shine and make for a great on-its-own sipper. **93 W&S, 90 WS**



2017 Mount Edward Riesling Lowburn Central Otago (\$17.99) Duncan Forsyth, the winemaker at Mount Edward, was one of the first to produce wines in Central Otago. Though a young region for wine, this area is receiving unbounding critical acclaim for their phenomenal offerings. One aspect that makes this site unique is the larger-than-average quantity of UV rays that come through to the grapes. This, combined with the continental climate, schist soils, and large diurnal shifts, allows the grapes to become physiologically ripe without getting overly sweet. The result is a Riesling with piercing acidity but freshness balanced by delicate fruit, a slight toastiness, and a perfect six grams per liter of residual sugar (RS). **93 JS, 92 RP**



2018 TWR (Te Whare Ra) "M" SV5182 Riesling Marlborough (\$19.99) Anna and Jason Flowerday own the oldest grapevines in Marlborough and they certainly know what to do with them. Their first passion is aromatic whites and this medium-dry style, with 30 grams per liter RS, makes for an extremely smashable offering. Coming from their estate vineyard, the BioGrow number they list on their label demonstrates their commitment to organic and biodynamic farming. Showing pure fruit, elegance and age-worthiness, this is one of the most exciting wines on the shelf. **95 SK, 93 BC, 93 JS, 93 RC**

2018 Fromm Spätlese Riesling Marlborough (\$16.99) Winemaker Hätsch Kalberer's love for Riesling stems from the wide range of styles it is capable of producing. This bottling of Fromm Spätlese has a phenomenal acid-to-sugar balance reminiscent of the Mosel. The dry summer weather in Marlborough helps keep botrytis at bay, so the wines never become too sweet or syrupy. They develop natural sugars while maintaining bright acidity thanks to cool nights in the valleys. At 87 grams per liter RS and only 7.5% alcohol, this wine is the perfect porch sipper and leaves the palate refreshed and wanting more.



The New Zealand Container Has Arrived!

Fans of our Direct Imports from New Zealand will be very happy to discover we have many of our most lauded wines back in stock! For those unfamiliar with these labels, now is a fantastic time to try them for yourself.

TWR (Te Whare Ra) Wines, operated by our favorite wife and husband team, Anna and Jason Flowerday, has some gorgeous new offerings, all receiving fantastic critical acclaim. Their

devotion to organic and biodynamic farming shows up in the flavor of the wines. They are fresh, delicate, graceful and intricate. Their passion lies in the aromatic whites and they make a few standout ones. The **2018 TWR “Toru” White Field Blend Marlborough (\$19.99)** is a fun blend of Gewürztraminer, Riesling, and Pinot Gris (Toru means “three” in Maori) that are co-fermented. Tropical lychee and guava meld beautifully with white peach blossom and lively acidity.

93 RC, 93 SK

The classics are also accounted for in their wildly popular **2018 TWR (Te Whare Ra) Sauvignon Blanc Marlborough (\$19.99)**. There is a dominant textural element present in this wine owing to lees aging in 8% seasoned French oak. A blend of grapes from both the Upper Awatere Valley and the TWR Home Block in the Wairau Valley add depth and intricacy. A rich, mineral-driven palate, combined with notes of classic gooseberry and citrus make this one a staff favorite. **95 BC, 94 SC, 93 RC**

Recently named No. 16 in James Suckling’s Top 100 New Zealand Wines of 2018, the **2014 TWR “SV5182 – Single Vineyard” Pinot Noir Marlborough (\$39.99)** has some serious complexity and drive behind it. The blend of clones from all estate fruit adds nuance of flavor including red and black fruits, dried herb, and dusty tannin. The BioGro number SV5182 is essentially a zip code for the vineyard, allowing transparency in the origin and farming of the fruit, all-important factors for these biodynamically dedicated farmers. **96 JS, 96 SK, 93 RC**

Mount Edward Winery was one of the first wineries to be established in the Central Otago appellation in the late 1980s, and the winery, with Duncan Forsyth at the helm, has been forging the way and leading others since. Although it is a young winemaking region, the wines produced here can stand up to any Old World site



in terms of their refinement and quality. Central Otago has an anomalous continental climate (most others are maritime in New Zealand) characterized by hot days and very cool nights, which allows for bright, fresh flavors while retaining great acidity. One such example is the **2018 Mount Edward Gamay Central Otago (\$17.99)**, which, according to the winemaker, is not meant to be sipped, it’s meant to be drunk. Bright, refreshing flavors spread across the palate thanks to no added sulfur and a blend of tank and seasoned oak aging. The fruit comes from the Morrison vineyard, one of their top Pinot Noir producing sites, and is a very unique find from this region, as almost no one produces Gamay.

One of our favorite food pairing wines that can be drunk all year round is rosé, and Duncan’s **2018 Mount Edward Pinot Noir Rosé Central Otago (\$14.99)** is the first 2018 we have in stock. It’s 100% Pinot Noir and all from a single block of the Muirkirk vineyard, a site that is picked specifically for rosé, and is the more sophisticated of the two rosés they produce. Dry and crisp with lovely berry notes, this is the perfect wine to usher in Spring. **90-91 JS**

Though originally planted to all red varieties, the majority of the Morrison vineyard turned out to actually be better suited to white wines. Working with what the soils give, Duncan chose to make a **2017 Mount Edward Chardonnay Bannockburn Central Otago (\$19.99)**. There is a hefty dose of acidity, even after going through full malolactic fermentation, but it is beautifully balanced with spicy vanilla and toasted cereal notes. The wine is aged in old French oak (no new oak is used) and does not undergo fining or filtering, to preserve the complex characteristics and nuanced flavors.

Our third new arrival is Marlborough powerhouse Fromm Winery. Fromm’s emphasis on small yields, organic viticulture, and minimal intervention winemaking has resulted in some truly spectacular Pinot Noirs. The **2017 Fromm Pinot Noir Marlborough (\$24.99)** is a blend of the four vineyards Fromm sources from and is an intricately wound blend of 11 different clones. It is meant to represent the three different sub-regions of Marlborough from the heavier clay soils of Brancott to the gravel and silt of the Wairau Valley. This combination produces a wine of deep and brilliant red fruits with just enough backbone.

One of Fromm’s single vineyard offerings, the **2017 Fromm “Clayvin Vineyard” Pinot Noir Marlborough (\$44.99)** is much more brooding, with dark, supple fruits, earthy spice, and a long finish, and offers a fascinating contrast to the other single vineyard bottlings. **96 JS**





South African Pinotage: More Quality Options Than Ever Before

With almost no other wine region in the world producing this unique varietal, South Africa has forged the way in the polarizing world of Pinotage. A genetic cross of Pinot Noir and Cinsault, it was created in South Africa in 1925 by Abraham Izak Perold, the first Professor of Viticulture at Stellenbosch University. Perold sought to combine the best qualities of both varietals, highlighting the heartier qualities of Cinsault and the elegant, ethereal ones of Pinot Noir.

Production and quality of Pinotage bottlings have grown exponentially since it was first introduced. The grape produces a wide range of styles from light and fruity to tannic and rich, making it fun to explore, but perhaps a little intimidating. Ranging in price from \$10 to \$100, there is an option for anyone looking to explore this fun, uncommon varietal.

2016 Beeslaar Pinotage Stellenbosch (\$39.99)

From winemaker Abrie Beeslaar comes one of the most critically acclaimed Pinotages on the market. Abrie, who has been named “International Winemaker of the Year” three separate times, also happens to be the winemaker at the premier Pinotage winery, Kanonkop. When he is not making the Grand Cru of Pinotage for Kanonkop, he is doing it for his own label. Elegant, complex, and age-worthy, this is one of the best Pinotages I’ve ever tasted.



2016 FRAM Pinotage Citrusdal Mountain Western Cape (\$24.99)

Coming from the Citrusdal Mountain region north of the Swartland, these Pinotage vines sit in red sandy soil, the hallmark of dry and difficult growing conditions. Thanks to the vines’ struggle for survival, consumers are left with a wine of great length and intensity, with purity of fruit and just the right balance of structure to grace.



2016 Diemersfontein Pinotage Wellington (\$19.99)

One of the richest and darkest fruited Pinotages on the shelf, this is a blend of fruit from six vineyards in the heart of the Cape Winelands. Dominated by notes of coffee and chocolate, this wine could be paired with lamb stew or prime rib, but the winery really feels it fits best with rich chocolate lava cake.



2015 Beaumont Pinotage Bot River South Africa (\$27.99)

From the cool climate of the Bot River region, the majority of this wine is made from 40-plus-year-old vines. The older vines lend structure and length, while the younger vines contribute bright red fruit and vibrancy. Fermentation occurs in concrete tanks, which helps round out harsh edges without contributing any oak flavor. This one is fresh and absolutely delicious! 92 JS



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