



# **WINEWISE**

**THE CONSUMER'S WINE GUIDE**

**November 2013**



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# 100 PINOT NOIRS

**T**hrough sheer good fortune I had, in the space of a month, the opportunity to judge about 200 pinot noirs in two wine shows. Needless to say, all the wines were judged blind and discussed with other judges. The ranking of the reviews is based on my own scores.

Although both shows were open to wines from regions outside Tasmania, the pinots from our island state dominated. Bear in mind that these are all young pinots. I'm not strongly influenced by depth of colour, but I am by brightness. Pinot noirs 1-3 years old should be vivid and youthful in colour. For those who wish to put up a "Burgundian" challenge to those guidelines, I've never observed any browning or over-development in colour when tasting young wines at the likes of Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, De Vogüé or Rousseau.

Some Australian makers choose to engineer complexity into young pinot noirs, sacrificing colour and freshness. I prefer wines that gradually reach that complexity with bottle age. There's nothing wrong with using stems or whole bunches but, if in the process, the wine loses freshness in its infancy, the exercise is of dubious value.

## Outstanding

**2012 The Wine Society Directors' Selection Pinot Noir** This stunning young pinot noir from Tasmania's Coal River region swept all before it at the Hobart Wine Show, winning four trophies including Best Red Wine of Show. It's a vibrant and perfumed, with a positive herbal hint. The palate is long and silky. (\$33.00)  
<http://www.winesociety.com.au/society-labels/directors-selection/191>

**2012 Pooley Coal River Pinot Noir** An impressively intense young pinot noir which is bright, youthful and cherry-scented, with a faint brambly complexity. The palate has all the texture and fineness one would expect of an outstanding pinot noir. (\$40.00)  
<http://www.winestar.com.au/prod3274.htm>

**2012 Kelvedon Estate Pinot Noir** From the Tasmanian east coast near Swansea, this pinot is very well endowed with dark cherry aroma and flavour. There's an appealing, faintly herbal touch to the intense perfumed nose, and the palate is long, fine and silky. Lovely stuff. (\$35.00)  
<http://www.kelvedonestate.com.au/pinot.html>

**2012 Ese Vineyard Pinot Noir** This wine comes from a tiny vineyard in the Coal River region of Tasmania. It's packed with dark cherry flavour and has firm but appropriate tannin. There seems to be good cellaring potential here. I understand that this wine hasn't yet been released, but it is likely to sell in the \$35.00-\$40.00 range. Try [ese@south.com.au](mailto:ese@south.com.au) or 0417 313 463.

**2012 Diamond Island Pinot Noir** A vibrant young pinot from the Tasmanian east coast near Bicheno showing abundant primary red berry fruit. The palate has good structure and the finish is long. This wine begs for a few years' cellaring. Again, it is yet to be released, but it's likely to sell in the \$30.00-\$40.00 range.  
[dipinot@hotmail.com](mailto:dipinot@hotmail.com) 0409 003 988.

**2012 Bream Creek Pinot Noir** If you're looking for a pinot from the bigger end of town, this one could be for you. It's richly flavoured and quite firm, but the freshness and intensity suggest that cellaring will be well rewarded. Not yet released. Bream Creek vineyard is situated close to the coast between Sorell and Port Arthur, Tasmania.  
<http://www.breamcreekvineyard.com.au/index.php>

To the best of my knowledge five of the top six wines were made by Winemaking Tasmania, headed by Julian Alcorso.  
<http://www.winetas.com.au/>  
The quality of the wines is a great credit to Julian and his team.

### Highly Recommended

**2012 Home Hill Kelly's Reserve Pinot Noir** The strong summer pudding aromas are captivating, and similar flavours simply flood the palate. The tannins are fine and balanced. Not yet released.  
<http://www.homehillwines.com.au/>

**2012 Richard Meyman Bersenbruck Pinot Noir** This concentrated dark cherry style shows some oak, but the richness of flavour absorbs the wood component well. This is very much a cellaring style. Not yet released.  
<http://www.richardmeymanwines.com.au/services>

**2011 Pooley Butcher's Hill Pinot Noir** Although the 2011 vintage isn't as highly regarded as 2012, this wine certainly delivers the goods. There's plenty of fresh succulent varietal flavour here. Excellent drinking. (\$45.00)

**2011 Coal Valley Vineyard Pinot Noir** It's showing a little development but the complexity that results more than makes up for it. The palate is supple, balanced and satisfying. (\$30.00)  
<http://www.pinotshop.com/products/coal-valley-vineyard-2011-pinot-noir>

**2012 Pooley Pinot Noir** The sheer vibrancy and approachability of this pinot make it a very attractive drink. One for the short term. (\$30.00)

**2011 Derwent Estate Pinot Noir** A very appealing young pinot noir with some background complexity. The palate is commendably long, framed by fine tannins. (\$30.00)

<http://www.triowine.com.au/all-tasmanian-wine-1/red-wine/pinot-noir/buy-derwent-estate-pinot-noir-wine-online.html>

**2012 Chartley Estate Black Crow Pinot Noir** This is an intense, perfumed, subtly complex pinot noir of impressive length and balance. The firm, fine tannins linger on the finish. Cellar 2-3 years. Not yet released. Probably will be under \$30.00.

<http://chartleyestatevineyard.com.au/index.php/red-wine.html>

**2012 Abel's Tempest Pinot Noir** The fragrant dark cherry nose appeals, as does the rich, well structured palate. This Treasury Wine Estates pinot is quite silky, and will drink well on release.

**2012 Pooley Butcher's Hill Pinot Noir** It's a substantial pinot which needs to open up, but there's no denying the quality of this wine. The concentrated flavour is wrapped in firm tannins. Definitely one for cellaring. Not yet released.

**2012 Home Hill Estate Pinot Noir** Rich, ripe and plummy, but fresh and lively. The fine tannins and good acidity provide excellent balance. (\$34.90)

<http://www.triowine.com.au/all-tasmanian-wine-1/red-wine/pinot-noir/home-hill-estate-pinot-noir.html>

**2012 Bay Of Fires Eddystone Point Pinot Noir** An attractive fragrant pinot noir with satisfying varietal flavour and fine tannins. Give it a year or two to soften. Not yet released.

**2012 Pinnacle Liquor Group Tasters Choice NS01 Adelaide Hills Pinot Noir** This wine is a Woolworths brand that you may find in BWS or Dan Murphy's. It's also the first non-Tasmanian wine at No.17 in the order. The rich dark cherry characteristics and mouthfilling nature of the wine are its strong points. The oak is a little prominent.

**2013 Frenchmans Cap Pinot Noir** I've often wondered why more pinot noir producers don't make good early-drinking "Beaujolais" styles. This is just such a wine – a genuine light-bodied dry red that is downright delicious. Perfect for summer drinking. (\$20.00)

<http://www.winestreet.com.au/?s=FRENCHMAN%27S>

**2012 De Bortoli Yarra Valley Estate Pinot Noir** Shows some slightly developed colour but has an interesting brambly complexity. The palate is long, with a firm finish. (\$30.00)

**2012 Goatly Hill Pinot Noir** An attractive red berry style with subtle complex notes. The palate has a "juicy" middle, good length and fine tannins. (\$35.00)

<https://www.goatlyhill.com/wine-order-form.htm>

## Recommended

**2012 Tamar Ridge Reserve Pinot Noir** A fresh, fragrant style with power and structure. Needs time.

**2012 Barringwood Estate Mill Block Pinot Noir** The vibrant cherry fruit is attractive and is backed by subtle complex notes. It's a delicate wine with fine, persistent tannins.

**2012 Yellow Point Bloody Eleventh Pinot Noir** A youthful, fresh dark cherry/plum style that offers good early drinking.

**2012 Pages Creek Pinot Noir** A deep purple pinot noir which is packed with rich dark cherry flavour. The tannin structure is strong, demanding a few years' cellaring.

**2012 Shoreham Park Pinot Noir** This is a vibrant strawberry-scented wine with a whiff of new oak. The finish is persistent and the tannins are fine.

**2011 Kelvedon Estate Pinot Noir** This wine is beginning to drink well, and the fine savoury tannins are a strong point.

**2012 Cellarmasters Balnarring Mornington Peninsula** A fresh dark cherry style with an attractive touch of oak. Good early drinking.

**2011 Richard Meyman Bersenbruck Pinot Noir** Quite firm, but has good fruit weight. Needs time to soften.

**2011 Bream Creek Pinot Noir** A fresh pinot with slightly briary secondary characteristics and adequate mid palate weight. Short term.

**2011 Home Hill Kelly's Reserve Pinot Noir** Shows quite vibrant red berry fruit with sappy complexity. Needs a little more mid palate.

**2011 Home Hill Estate Pinot Noir** There's no lack of varietal character, but the structure is a little too firm for the fruit weight.

**2012 Home Hill Landslide Pinot Noir** An attractive dark cherry pinot with fresh primary fruit. Good short term drinking.

**2012 Kyneton Ridge Estate Pinot Noir** This is a big firm pinot which is packed with flavour. It definitely needs time.

**2012 Brown Magpie Single Vineyard Pinot Noir** Shows ripe fruit on the nose. The palate is supple and appealing.

**2013 Josef Chromy Pepik Pinot Noir** Fresh, light and fruity. Very drinkable.

**2012 Echelon Wine Partners Last Horizon Pinot Noir** Quite funky and complex. Shows some acid on the finish but has adequate fruit.

**2012 Griffin Adelaide Hills Pinot Noir** Quite intense and packed with dark cherry flavour. A little too firm now. Needs time.

**2012 T'Gallant Tribute Pinot Noir** A very big, firm pinot that makes up in flavour for what it lacks in finesse.

**2010 Fluted Cape Pinot Noir** Quite a firm style reflecting very ripe fruit, but it certainly doesn't lack flavour.

**2011 Kate Hill Pinot Noir** Shows bright cherry fruit but is quite firm.

**2012 Bay Of Fires Pinot Noir** Fresh and varietal but a tad light and simple.

**2012 Tamar Ridge Pinot Noir** Quite perfumed, with reasonable mid palate fruit.

**2012 Derwent Estate Pinot Noir** Quite primary in nature. Shows some berry jam aroma, but is a decent mouthful.

**2012 Robert Oatley Finisterre Denmark Pinot Noir** A dry, savoury style with complex notes. It's a little too advanced but is drinking well.

**2012 Indigo Vineyard Secret Village Pinot Noir** This is a rich dark cherry style that is soft and supple, but simple.

**2010 Forty Two Degrees South Pinot Noir** A fresh red berry style of decent structure and length.

**2012 Nepenthe The Good Doctor Adelaide Hills Pinot Noir** A fresh simple, short term pinot noir with adequate fruit.

**2012 Wolf Blass Gold Label Pinot Noir** Shows good weight of ripe varietal fruit but it's not quite as vibrant as the top wines.

**2012 Montalto Vineyards Main Ridge Block Pinot Noir** An attractively perfumed pinot that is just a little light.

**2012 Dalrymple Pinot Noir** A vibrant dark cherry style with tannins that are a little too firm.

**2012 Pressing Matters Pinot Noir** This is a wine of substance, but it needs to open up and soften.

**2011 Pressing Matters Block B Pinot Noir** Shows development in colour, nose and palate but has structure and flavour.

**2012 Nepenthe Altitude Pinot Noir** A plain ripe cherry style with weight and structure.

## Agreeable

**2012 The Lake House Denmark Pinot Noir** Shows good varietal character but is a little advanced. Short term.

**2012 Relbia Estate Pinot Noir** Comparatively big and solid, and doesn't quite have the vibrancy of the top wines.

**2012 Robert Oatley Finisterre Mornington Peninsula Pinot Noir** Colour shows development. Has flavour but isn't quite fresh enough.

**2012 Montalto Estate Pinot Noir** Fresh but simple and comparatively light.

**2013 Devil's Corner Pinot Noir** Shows fresh morello cherry aromas, and the palate is light, approachable and fruit-sweet.

**2012 DiGiorgio Family Wines Kongorong Pinot Noir** Has flavour and structure but isn't quite fresh enough.

**2012 Hardys Eileen Hardy Pinot Noir** A big firm style that needs time to soften.

**2011 Norfolk Bay Pinot Noir** Shows a perfumed cherry nose and has good length on a firm palate.

**2012 St Huberts Yarra Valley Pinot Noir** Shows some reductive character but has flavour and structure.

**2012 Robert Oatley Signature Series Pinot Noir** A firm, plain style, but it does offer reasonable flavour.

**2012 Castle Rock Estate Pinot Noir** Fresh simple drinking.

**2012 Moppity Vineyards Coppabella Pinot Noir** The nose is light, but the palate offers some weight and structure.

**2012 Barringwood Estate Pinot Noir** Varietal, but light and fairly firm.

**2012 Evans & Tate Porongurup Pinot Noir** Shows red berry characteristics but is fairly vegetal.

**2010 Richard Meyman Bersenbruck Pinot Noir** Quite big and firm. Lacks polish.

**2011 Pressing Matters Pinot Noir** Quite advanced in all respects, but shows some complexity.

**2012 St Huberts The Stag Pinot Noir** On the light side and shows some oak.

**2012 Rockcliffe Single Site Pinot Noir** Very light colour. The palate is simple but has flavour.

## Acceptable

**2012 Centennial Woodside Pinot Noir** Fresh, but light in all respects.

**2012 Yarra Ridge Pinot Noir** Light and advanced.

**2012 Montalto Pennon Hill Pinot Noir** Simple, lacking middle palate.

**2012 Riversdale Centaurus Reserve Tasmanian Pinot Noir** Huge wine (for pinot noir)! Deep purple colour.

**2012 Winstead Vineyard Pinot Noir** A bit dry-reddish and developed. Big and firm.

**2012 Cellarmasters Across The Bay Mornington Peninsula Pinot Noir** Light and simple.

**2012 Ross Hill Pinnacle Pinot Noir** Simple, showing a hint of volatile acidity.

**2012 Brangayne of Orange Pinot Noir** A firm, solid pinot noir.

**2012 Jacob's Creek Reserve Adelaide Hills Pinot Noir** Ripe, firm, puckering.

**2012 Rochford l'Enfant Unique Pinot Noir** Colour not brilliant. The nose is slightly stemmy and the palate is forward and dry.

**2012 Ferngrove Pinot Noir** Light, developed colour. Too firm for the fruit weight.

**2012 Plantagenet Omrah Great Southern Pinot Noir** Dull colour. Slightly developed and jammy.

**2012 Woodgate Pinot Noir** Comparatively advanced. Drying finish.

**2012 Cellarmasters Yarra View Pinot Noir** Lacks freshness.

**2012 Austins Pinot Noir** Shows a touch of oxidation.

**2012 Bay Estates Mornington Peninsula Pinot Noir** Dull, tending jammy.

**2012 Holm Oak Pinot Noir** Forward and fairly jammy.

**2013 Logan Weemala Pinot Noir** Light and forward. Losing freshness.

**2012 Highland Brae Pinot Noir** Dull, minty and thin.

**2011 Moorilla Muse Pinot Noir** Light colour. Developed. Signs of drying out.



**2012 Domaine Rogha Crois Pinot Noir** Very pale. Lacks substance.

**2012 Bendooley Vineyard Pinot Noir** Very jammy and dull.

**2012 Habitat Vineyard Coonabaloo Dress Circle Pinot Noir** Light and jammy.

**2012 Bagdad Hills Pinot Noir** Very deep colour. Over-extracted.

**2012 Philip Shaw No. 8 Pinot Noir** Already quite developed.

**2012 Bruny Island Premium Wines Pinot Noir** Advanced colour. Too developed.

**2012 Howling Wolves Red Wolf Pinot Noir** Too advanced.

Now that it's become clear where we should, and should not, plant pinot noir, it's clearly time for producers in some regions to consider why they are persisting with the variety.

**Lester Jesberg**

## **Shaw + Smith Tolpuddle**

These are the first releases since Shaw + Smith purchased the Tolpuddle vineyard in Tasmania's Coal River Valley in 2011. When Tolpuddle was planted in 1988, it was seen as an ideal source of grapes for sparkling wine, but times change.

**2012 Tolpuddle Vineyard Chardonnay** This is a delightfully subdued chardonnay which, like the Dawson & James that topped our international tasting, gives an insight into the bright future of chardonnay in Tasmania. The nose teases, showing hints of grapefruit, white nectarine, nuts and butter. The palate offers a lesson in fineness and texture, finishing long and acid-fresh.

(\$59.00) ***Outstanding***

<http://www.winehouse.com.au/ShowWines.asp?pID=39479&c=30398>

<http://www.edinburgh.com.au/products/wine/tolpuddle-chardonnay>

**2012 Tolpuddle Vineyard Pinot Noir** I was totally seduced by the marvellous aromatics of this wine which suggested rose petal and bramble. The palate combines flavour, silkiness and grip very well indeed. (\$68.00) ***Highly Recommended***

<http://www.edinburgh.com.au/products/wine/tolpuddle-pinot-noir>

**Lester Jesberg**

## **2014 ORANGE F.O.O.D. WEEK**

The dates for the 2014 Orange F.O.O.D Week have been announced, with the annual food and wine festival running from Friday 4th April through to Sunday 13th April 2014.

Now in its 23rd year, Orange F.O.O.D Week will once again bring together the best of the Orange region, and producers, growers, winemakers and chefs will unite to provide guests and visitors with intimate and engaging experiences of the region.

The key events of F.O.O.D Week are:

### **Orange F.O.O.D Week Night Markets**

*Friday 4 April 2014*

This is the official launch event of the 2014 Orange FOOD Week, with over 40 of the region's best producers, chefs, restaurants and wineries gathering in the beautiful surrounds of centrally-located Robertson Park. Live entertainment and communal seating will again make this one of the week's best-attended events.

### **The F.O.O.D Week 100-Mile Dinner**

*Monday 7 April 2013*

The F.O.O.D Week Committee and the Molong Progress Association will host the sixth 100 Mile Dinner. This dinner combines seasonal produce sourced from within the region including Orange, Bathurst, Canowindra, Cowra, Molong, Mudgee and Young. This is one of the signature events and sells out within 48 hours of the tickets being released.

### **F.O.O.D Train**

*Friday 11 April 2014, returning 13 April*

Be guided throughout F.O.O.D. Week, starting with a relaxing train trip through the picturesque Blue Mountains to Orange. The train trip, event tickets, accommodation, transfers and meals will be arranged, with nothing left for you to do than enjoy the journey.

### **FORAGE**

*Saturday 12 April 2014*

Forage is a gentle 3.6km walk between the villages of Borenore and Nashdale, with tasting stations set within the vineyards and hosted by local growers and winemakers. This is one of Australia's unique food and wine experiences.

### **F.O.O.D Central @ Union Bank Wine Bar**

*Saturday 12 to Sunday 20 April 2013*

F.O.O.D Central will operate throughout the week to provide a meeting spot for all things F.O.O.D. The F.O.O.D ambassadors and producers will be offering local food and presenting information on the region.

<http://www.orangefoodweek.com.au>

## 2013 RIESLING

Vintage 2013 had a hard act to follow in both the east and the west. Here are our notes on wines from some key producers on both sides of the country.

Note: All these wines were tasted blind by the Winewise panel.

**Excellent value wines in purple.**

### Highly Recommended

**2013 Grosset Springvale Clare Valley Riesling** Shows pronounced lime florals with a touch of free sulphur. It's an impressive dry style with intensity and acidity. Ideal for short-term cellaring. (\$39.00)

**2013 Grosset Polish Hill Clare Valley Riesling** Richly limey in aroma but comparatively forward in colour and nose. It certainly doesn't lack flavour and follows through with uplifting acidity. If you choose to cellar this wine, monitor its progress carefully for the first couple of years. (\$52.00)

**2013 Cherubino Great Southern Riesling** Another riesling showing clear-cut lime characteristics on a powerful nose. The long, dry, flinty palate demands cellaring for 1-2 years. (\$35.00)

**2013 West Cape Howe Mount Barker Riesling** The nose shows fragrant, intense citrus blossom aromas and the palate is dry – almost to the point of austerity. An appealing, racy style for the riesling purist. (\$20.00)

### Recommended

**2013 The Yard Bimbimbi Vineyard Porongurup Riesling** There's good varietal intensity here, although some early development is showing. Attractive drinking. (\$25.00)

**2013 Gallagher Canberra District Riesling** Fairly forward, with lemony aromatics. The palate is fresh enough, with good acidity and persistent flavour. (\$20.00)

### Agreeable

**2013 Cherubino Porongurup Riesling** Reserved nose with hints of lime. Finishes dry, but short. (\$35.00)

**2013 The Yard Riversdale Vineyard Frankland River Riesling** Lacks immediate aromatic appeal. A plain riesling with a firm finish. May show more with time. (\$35.00)

**2013 O'Leary Walker Watervale Riesling** Forward colour and nose. Has plenty of flavour, but will mature quickly. (\$18.00)

**2013 O'Leary Walker Polish Hill River Riesling** Showing development in colour and nose. Drinkable and varietal, but too developed for a 2013. (\$20.00)

## Acceptable

**2013 Taylors St Andrews Clare Valley Riesling** Forward straw-like nose. Shows too much development. (\$40.00)

**2013 Sheer Drop Riesling** Dull colour. Broad and biscuit-like aromas and flavours. (\$20.00)

Although this is only a small sample, first indications are that 2013 has produced comparatively early drinking rieslings. We strongly suggest trying any wines you're thinking of cellaring, rather than simply storing without tasting.

## ABOUT WINEWISE

*Winewise Magazine* was founded in 1985. Each year we review more than 2,500 wines in six issues (at least 32 pages per issue) covering all the major varietal styles at least twice. We report on the world's best winemakers and viticultural regions, and our editorials tackle some of the major issues in the world of wine.

In addition, we provide a comprehensive coverage of the best of Australia's small wineries by conducting the annual *Winewise Small Vigneron Awards*.

The *Winewise Championship*, conducted every February, brings together the best of the best – gold medal winners from Australia's most significant wine shows. It's the only competition of its kind in the world.

Unlike other magazines, we publish reviews of all wines tasted by the panel and we don't restrict our tastings only to wines submitted by wine companies. We also purchase wines for tasting from retail outlets in Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra.

Apart from our own ad for the *Winewise Half-Dozen*, *Winewise* carries no advertising, and reviews of all wines tasted are published under the categories 'Outstanding', 'Highly Recommended', 'Recommended', 'Agreeable', 'Acceptable', and 'Unacceptable'.

*Winewise* is the only consumer wine magazine providing such a comprehensive coverage of Australian and imported wines.

## NATIONAL COOL CLIMATE WINE SHOW

I've judged at this Bathurst-based show for several years, and have always been impressed by the organisation and standard of judging. The Chair of the show is Tim Knappstein, and this year I headed one panel, supported by Russell Cody (McWilliams) and Mike De Iuliis (De Iuliis Wines). Andrew Spinaze (Tyrrell's) chaired the other, with Deb Pearce and Simon Nunns (Coopers Creek, NZ).

The NCCWS brings together many wines that aren't often seen in shows, and that's another of its strengths. For all the info, go to <http://www.coolwines.com.au/>

Here are my top wines – judged blind of course.

### **NV Centennial Pinot Noir Chardonnay Pinot Meunier**

Bowral (NSW) based Centennial Vineyards continues to add to its impressive trophy record. Centennial entered three wines in the 44 strong sparkling class and came away with two golds and a silver. This wine has an attractive, complex bready aroma, a long, fresh, intense palate and a creamy mousse. An ideal choice for Christmas and New Year. (\$28.00) **Highly Recommended**

<http://www.centennial.net.au/index.cfm?method=products.productdownload&productID=52658C9C-CB4B-6A08-4116-33079D503BC8>

**Note:** This wine won the best sparkling wine trophy.

**2013 Abbey Creek Vineyard Porongurup Riesling** This is a very racy, crisp riesling with an impressive line of acidity and flavour. It's quite reserved in character, and needs some bottle age, but it's a wine of exceptional purity and quality. **Outstanding**

Tel: 08 9853 1044 [abbeycreek@iprimus.com.au](mailto:abbeycreek@iprimus.com.au)

**Note:** This wine won trophies for best riesling and best dry white.

**2011 Ross Hill Pinnacle Chardonnay** Another success for this very progressive Orange (NSW) producer. Sold out at the winery and in short supply elsewhere, this exceptional example of cool climate chardonnay is a triumph for the vintage. It has a touch of wild yeast/lees funk and the white nectarine flavour runs long on a beautifully textured palate. (\$36.50) **Outstanding**

<http://www.wineseek.com.au/products/14-chardonnay/3566-ross-hill-pinnacle-chardonnay-2011/?bc=no>

**Note:** This wine won the best chardonnay trophy.

**Lester Jesberg**