

# Patty's Pinot Closet Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 2  
November, 2003  
Circulation 3,867

New Zealand Pinot Noir's

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Thank you all for the resounding response to my first Pinot Noir Newsletter. We're up to a circulation of almost 4,000 - wineries, restaurants, retailers, distributors, and friends. I appreciate your many favorable comments.

We welcome you to enjoy the newsletters and to share them with others. This, my second, covers my trip to New Zealand in February 2003 where I visited all the wine growing areas and tasted more than 80 Pinot Noirs. Tasting was done at wineries, wine festivals, and during very lovely dinners and lunches. Subsequent newsletters will cover Sonoma, Santa Barbara County, Australia, Oregon, Burgundy and other Pinot Noir growing areas. My credentials as a reviewer can be found at [Patty's Pinot Closet](#).

Patty's Pinot Closet web site contains information on Pinot Noir such as Pinot Noir culture, wine making, serving, regions and wineries, storing, wine events, restaurants with good wine lists, gifts, a glossary, and an archive of the newsletters. If you have material or ideas for the web site, [please contact me](#). Click [Patty's Pinot Closet](#) to explore my web site.

## New Zealand Food & Wine

**Marlborough:** New Zealand appears to have gone from a pub and beer culture to a great food and wine culture in a very short time. I can't tell you how many wonderful meals we enjoyed in New Zealand. Most every menu included lamb and venison as well as lots of fish. Our most memorable dining experience (food, wine, ambiance) occurred at the [Hertzog Winery](#) in Blenheim - the Marlborough Wine Region. My [web site](#) contains a list of the restaurants we most enjoyed while in New Zealand.

**Central Otago:** Another restaurant that deserved a second visit was Andy Donaldson & Pip Norris' [Olivers Historic Restaurant & Lodge](#) in Clyde, Central Otago, South Island. We stayed in their fabulously romantic smokehouse. From their wonderful wine list, we discovered the 2001 Felton Road Wines Ltd, Block 5, (our favorite wine of the trip.) We also fell in love with Chef Nicola's [Olive Soup](#).

**Martinborough:** We loved [The Martinborough Hotel](#) where our lovely room opened onto a courtyard with white roses, green grass, and a Boules Court. Every room has an old claw footed bath tub with lavender bath salts waiting for you. Dinner in their award



wining Bistro Restaurant was a truly lovely dining experience. In years to come what I will really remember about the hotel and bistro was a juice called Fajjoa (aka Banana Guava) made from a small green fruit. It was soooo good!

Before meals all over New Zealand, we often had a condiment called Dukkah which was served with olive oil and wonderful varieties of bread. Dukkah contains dry roasted nuts, sesame seeds, herbs, spices, and salt. You dunk your bread into the olive oil and then the dukkah. We were also served chunks of grilled lamb, which we dipped into dakkah, as an appetizer. It can also be used as a flavor enhancer on fish, pork, lamb or poultry during or after cooking. Try some on green salad, or over fresh vegetables. One of my favorite veggies is blanched asparagus pieces tossed in extra virgin olive oil and a tablespoon of dukkah. Click here for a Dukkah recipe, it is delicious. [Dukkah](#)

## New Zealand Wine Festivals

New Zealand has many wine festivals. I attended the BMW Wine Marlborough Festival and the Harvest Hawke's Bay Wine Festival.

### Harvest Hawke's Bay

Held in and around the beautiful art deco town of Napier. 28 wineries opened their doors for 4 fabulous days of tastings, tours, concerts and workshops. Many wineries served wonderful food to accompany their wines. Our first stop was Sacred Hill Winery which has lovely grounds and a picnic area. They had Portaloos (port-a-potties). We lunched on delicious garlic bratwurst on a sesame roll served with lettuce and condiments of country mustard (whole grain), onion, sweet fruit chutney, mango chutney, American mustard, hot mustard, and Jalapeno Chutney. They were very large and tasted very good. After 12 more wineries, food, music and tasting, we ended up at Churchill's Bar in Napier for a beer – tasted so good!.

A phrase that we learned in New Zealand was "Cellar Door Open" which means that the winery tasting room is open for you to taste and buy wine.



Pat at CJ Pask Winery



Churchill Bar

## BMW Wine Marlborough Festival

After a bus ride to Brancott Estates, we enjoyed the wines of about 40 wineries along with approximately 6,000 other people. We sat in a reserved, shaded marquee area and enjoyed interesting food and lovely pinots as we listened to smooth and mellow live jazz all day. Many people dressed up for the best dressed fashion awards. It was fun to watch them parading around while being judged. The 2004 [BMW Wine Marlborough Festival](#) will be held on Saturday 14 February.



BMW Wine Marlborough Festival at Brancott Estates

## Pinot Noir 2004

After NZ's Pinot Noir 2001, Jancis Robinson reported in the Financial Times, "A whole nation in love with Pinot Noir." I can testify that this is really true. The second international conference promises to be an even more exciting program. Nearly 100 New Zealand wine producers will participate in Pinot Noir 2004, and many overseas pinots will be featured in the tasting program. I am planning to attend [Pinot Noir 2004](#) in Wellington on 28 - 31 January 2004.

## Hawke's Bay Farmer's Market

As part of the Harvest Hawke's Bay Wine Festival, we attended the local Farmer's Market. Here we had great coffee and tasted a lot of wonderful foods. You could buy ostrich eggs and venison or ostrich burgers. They had a Simon and Garfunkle type band and even a clown. We bought olives, olive oil, dukkah, walnut bread, tomatoes, avocado, white peaches, and a beautiful salad mix with nasturtiums for a picnic at a winery later in the day.



## The Julie/Julia Project

My hats off to Julie Powell who cooked all 524 recipes in one year (365 days) from Julia Child's "Mastering the Art of French Cooking," first published in 1961. I have this 684 page cookbook and can't imagine how she managed to cook all of these recipes in one year while working full time. Some of them are very difficult and time consuming. She did admit that her husband Eric helped with the shopping when difficult to find items were encountered. Each morning she wrote about the previous night's cooking experience in a blog. She's a very entertaining writer - checkout day 365 - August 26, 2003. Her blog is called [The Julie/Julia Project](#). For those of you not familiar with a "BLOG" it is short for "Web Log", it is like a personal journal or diary posted to the web.

## Mushroom Aromas in Pinot Noir

My son Greg, daughter Kimberley, husband Jud and I often taste a bottle of pinot noir before dinner. Since pinot noirs often have a mushroomy characteristic, I asked Greg if he was getting mushroom aromas from a Pinot Noir we were tasting. He answered immediately with yes! - Sporadically!

# New Zealand Pinot Noir's

## New Zealand Wine History

New Zealand possesses the climate and soil types needed to produce premier Pinot Noir. And, indeed they are emerging as a premier producer of Pinot Noir. Pinot Noir first emerged as a New Zealand wine grape in the early 1970s. In a decade it migrated to the Martinborough (Wellington) and Hawkes Bay regions. This migration continued rapidly to the South Island wine growing regions.

## Regions:

Pinot Noir likes cool temperatures, low rainfall, and limestone based soils and therefore performs best in the southern regions of Wairarapa / Martinborough on the North Island and Marlborough, Canterbury, and Central Otago on the South Island.

## Hawkes Bay

Hawkes Bay is a cooler, high-altitude wine growing area that has had some success with Pinot Noir. Several wineries located here grew their pinot noir around Martinborough and the South Island.

## Wellington (Martinborough)

The soils of Martinborough are deep stony and silt loams over gravel. These soils have helped to make Martinborough the most acclaimed wine region of New Zealand. Here they produce wines with strong, ripe plum flavors and great concentration.

## Nelson – Marlborough

In Nelson and Marlborough we found cool temperatures accompanied by silty alluvial soils. The Pinot Noirs from these regions are fruity with strong cherry and plum flavors. A large percentage of Pinot Noir from the Marlborough region goes into sparkling wines.

## Canterbury (Waipara)

In the Waipara region, north of Christchurch, the soil is chalky loam with limestone deposits. They also have a cool and dry growing season. We tasted some very good Pinot Noirs in this region.

## Central Otago

In Central Otago we tasted the greatest number of wonderful Pinot Noirs during the trip. This area possess a dry, sunny climate and silt loam soils. The Pinot Noirs are elegant, long-lived wines with strong black cherry flavors – my favorites.

Prices are in United States dollars. If a price is missing that means that I did not find the wine available in the US. However, for our many readers in the UK and Canada many of these wines are available.



Winery	Year	Price	Rate	Description
Felton Road Wines Ltd, Block 5 Central Otago	2001	\$50	95	Deeply concentrated with aromas of black plums, cherry, and forest floor. Well balanced taste with silky tannins. A very long rich aftertaste.
Floating Mountain, Waipara Canterbury	2001		95	Cherry and plum aromas accompanied with spicy oak. Full rich fruity taste with fine tannins and a nice finish.
Martinborough Vineyard Ltd Martinborough	1999	\$30	95	Densely concentrated with aromas of black cherry, plum, and earthy tones. Red fruit and subtle tannins on the palate. Very Burgundian.
Wishart Estate Winery Ltd, Reserve Hawkes Bay	2001		95	Full bodied wine with black cherry and plum aromas. From Pinot Noir grapes grown on deep beach gravels. Eighteen months oak maturation in French barrels has produced a silky well-rounded wine.
Fromm - La Strada, Fromm Vineyard Marlborough	2001	\$33	94	Dark concentrated color with a dark cherry, current, earthy bouquet. Full bodied with a long delicious aftertaste.
Quartz Reef Central Otago	2001	\$32	94	Very concentrated with a bouquet of black cherries and plums. Big in the mouth with silky tannins. Long lovely aftertaste.
Rowland, Jill's Vineyard Central Otago	2001	\$26	93	Dense ruby-garnet unfiltered with earthy smokey cassis and blackberry aromas. Velvety and creamy in the mouth with a long lingering aftertaste.
Te Kairanga Martinborough	2001	\$21	93	Cherry and plum aromas with hints of nutmeg and savory. Nicely balanced fruit and tannins.
Wishart Estate Winery Ltd, Basket Press Hawkes Bay	2002		93	Medium bodied ruby colored wine with cherry and spice bouquet. Eight months oak maturation in French Burgundy barrels has softened and added richness to the wine.
Black Ridge Winery Central Otago	2001		92	A concentrated wine with a bouquet of black cherries, raspberries and plums. The taste brings spices, herbs & silky fruit tannins accompanied by a very long wonderful finish.
Escarpment Vineyard, Cleland Vineyard Martinborough	2001		92	Concentrated dark wine with dark cherry and fennel aromas. Palate of red fruits combined with soft silky tannins with a long finish.

Foxes Island Marlborough	2000		92	Aromas of cherries and black currant with spicy earthy mushroom tones. Well-balanced with a velvety feel in the mouth and a nice after taste.
Lawson's Dry Hills Marlborough	2001	\$18	92	Deep ruby color with cherries and plums in the aroma. Well balanced with silky elegant tannins and a long finish.
Mt Difficulty, Target Gully Central Otago	2000	\$25	92	Concentrated wine with a Black Cherry and plum bouquet. Balanced taste with long aftertaste.
Mudhouse Marlborough	2001	\$33	92	Concentrated black cherry and mushroom with intense flavor and a long aftertaste.
Nautilus Marlborough	2000	\$20	92	Dark ruby-garnet with aromas of raspberry and plum integrated with spice and a hint of violets. Full bodied on the palate with fine soft tannins and generous fruit flavors accompanied with an intense, long finish.
Nautilus Estate Marlborough	2001	\$27	92	Concentrated dark ruby with aromas of cherry and plum. Complex and velvety on the palate with a long finish.
Rippon Vineyard Ltd, Lake Wanaka Central Otago	1999	\$26	92	Concentrated with aromas of Black Cherry and plum. Well balanced, silky in the mouth, with a long aftertaste.
Vavasour Marlborough	2001		92	Deep colored with aromas of black cherry and spice. Plummy jammy taste balanced with soft tannins accompanied by a long finish.
Waipara Springs, Reserve Canterbury	2001		92	Plum, black cherry, spice, toasted oak and savory aromas. A silky taste of fruit and tannins followed by a long finish.
Akarua, Gullies Vineyard Central Otago	2001		91	Medium concentration with plum fruit in the bouquet. Complex and silky taste with a nice aftertaste.
Alpha Domus Hawkes Bay	2002		91	Barrel Sample - Concentrated wine with intense blackberry aroma. Big in the mouth with good balance and tannins. Lovely jammy aftertaste.
Cloudy Bay Marlborough	2001	\$30	91	Concentrated wine with cherries, violets and spice aromas. Balanced red fruit and silky tannins with toasty oak and savory earthy characters. Long finish.
Isabel Estate Marlborough	2001	\$25	91	Deep colored with aromas of cherries and plums. Balanced fruit and silky tannins with a slightly light texture. Long lingering aftertaste.

Spy Valley Marlborough	2001	\$18	90	Medium dense ruby colored wine. Black cherry and blueberry aromas with a bouquet of sage and toast. Extra complexity is derived from barrel ageing on fine lees. This adds a toasty gamey dimension to the wine. Nicely balanced but slightly thin on the palate with a medium lasting aftertaste.
Syren Central Otago	2001	\$25	90	Medium density ruby-garnet wine with a very burgundian nose. Bouquets of black currant and blackberry with earthy mushroom and vanilla. Tastes of berries and slightly low in tannins and body. Medium length aftertaste.
The Crossings Marlborough, Awatere Valley	2002	\$17	90	Medium density ruby wine with dark cherry, spicy, earthy bouquet. Well-balanced with tastes of strawberries with a long persistent aftertaste.
Stoneleigh Vineyards, Rapaura Series Marlborough	2001		91	Bright ruby wine with aromas of red cherry, savory, spice and subtle oak toast. Ripe red berry fruit flavors accompanied by soft-silky tannins and a lingering fruit finish.
Voss Estate Martinborough	2001		91	Concentrated dark wine with aromas of dark cherry, violets and smoky oak. Black fruit and soft silky tannins on the palate and a long finish.
Ata Rangi Martinborough	2000	\$43	90	Aromas of plums, spice and earthy tones. Velvety in the mouth with a long aftertaste.
Chard Farm, Finla Mor Vineyard Central Otago	2001		90	Concentrated wine with black cherry aromas. Silky balanced on the pallet accompanied by a long finish.
Kim Crawford Marlborough	2001	\$30	90	Moderate depth garnet with aromas of raspberry, strawberry and cherry, and hints of oak. Medium bodied ripe red fruit and soft tannins and a touch of oak.
Mt Difficulty Central Otago	2001		90	Concentrated wine with black cherry and blackberry combine with coffee and spice bouquet. Balanced taste of fruit and silky tannin accompanied by a long finish.
Peregrine Wines Central Otago Ltd Central Otago	2001		90	Aromas of blackberries, plum, and spices. Well balanced fruit and silky tannins on the finish.
Murdock James Estate Ltd, Blue Rock Vineyard Martinborough	2001		90	Dark inky wine with aromas of dark cherries, violets, vanilla & mushrooms Full bodied on the palate with plums & mocha.
Two Paddocks Ltd Central Otago	2000	\$29	90	Concentrated wine with aromas of dried herbs, blackberry, and black current. Tastes of smoky dark chocolate and plum flavors with a firm long finish.

Daniel Schuster, Omihi Hills Waipara	2001	\$43	89	
Dry Gully Vineyard Central Otago	2001	\$41	89	Aromas of thyme, sage, strawberry, blackberry and mushroom. Light texture of well balanced fruit and tannin.
Fiddler's Green Wines, Waipara Canterbury	2001		89	Light ruby wine with aromas of cherries and spice. Some complexity and tannin with a lingering finish.
Fromm - La Strada, Clayvin Vineyard Marlborough	2001		89	Concentrated perfumy wine. Well-balanced soft & silky wine with hints of oak and a long aftertaste.
Greenhough Vineyard & Winery Nelson	2001		89	Dark concentrated wine with aromas of black cherries. Dense fruit and silky tannin on the palate with a lingering finish.
Hunters, Marlborough Marlborough	2001		89	Aromas of plum, spice, cherry and toasty oak. Fruit and soft round tannins and moderate length aftertaste.
Nevis Bluff Vineyard Central Otago	2001		89	Light wine with aromas of strawberry. Light well balanced with a long aftertaste.
Pisa Range Estate Vineyard Central Otago	2001		89	Concentrated wine with aromas of cherry and spice. Well balanced fruit and toasted oak tannins. Won a Silver Bragato Award
Two Paddocks Ltd Central Otago	1999	\$25	89	Ripe black cherries and spice. Good balance but slightly thin. Sage in the aftertaste. Goes well with food.
Villa Maria, Reserve Marlborough	2001	\$29	89	Aromas of red plums Figs and perfumed oak in the taste.
Firstland Auckland	2001		88	Fruity raspberry and cherry with nice fine-grained tannins.
Mount Riley Wines, Seventeen Valley Marlborough	NV	\$59	88	Concentrated wine with aromas of cherry, plum and spice. Full bodied with fine tannins with an unusual aftertaste
Moutere Hills Vineyard Nelson	2001		88	Aromas of red cherry. Red fruit well balanced with French Oak, silky intense flavor. Lovely long finish.
Spencer Hill Estate, Moutere, Evans Vineyard Nelson	2000		88	Aromas of black cherry and blackberry. Soft, subtle fruit with a trace of oak.
Martinborough Vineyard Ltd Martinborough	2001	\$33	86	Ruby red wine with aromas of cherry, savory and spice. Soft texture with fruit and hints of tar and tea combined with silky tannins and a long finish.
Saint Clair, Omaka, Reserve Marlborough	2001	\$16	86	Plum and cherry aromas with silky tannins and subtle toasty oak in the mouth.

Akarua, The Gullies Central Otago	2001		85	Light textured with aromas of cherries and spice. Soft tannins and fruit in the taste.
Alana Estate Ltd Martinborough	2001		85	
Crossroads Winery Lt, Reserve Hawkes Bay	2000		85	Medium concentration with aromas of cherry, plum, earthiness and mushroom. Nice balance and aftertaste.
Glover's Vineyard Nelson	2000		85	Aromas of cherries with cherry, licorice and clove accompanied by tannin on the palate.
Kahurangi Estate Nelson	2001		85	Aromas of cherry, spice & vanilla.
Leaning Rock Vineyard Central Otago	1999		85	Dark ruby color with light aromas of cherries and raspberry.
Muirlea Rise Martinborough	1999		85	Aromas of cherry and herb. Creamy taste and lovely aftertaste.
Muirlea Rise Martinborough	2000		85	Aromas of cherry, violets, and oak. Velvety texture in the mouth with a long lingering aftertaste.
Muirlea Rise Martinborough	2001		85	
Tasman Bay Nelson	2000		85	Light wine with aromas of cherry and spice. Light textured fruit driven wine.
Torlesse Wines, Canterbury Canterbury	2002		85	Light color and texture with aromas of cherries and strawberries.
Waipara Downs Canterbury	2001		85	Light texture and garnet color with a lovely fruity nose. Light and silky on the palate.
Waipara Springs Canterbury	2001		85	Lighter style with aromas of cherry, plum, savory and spice. A good balance of fruit and tannins followed by a lingering finish.
Winslow Wines Ltd, Colton Vineyards Martinborough	2002		85	
Neudorf Vineyards, Moutere Nelson	2001	\$36		purported to be wonderful but not available for tasting

**Subsequent Newsletters** will cover Oregon, Sonoma, Napa, Santa Barbara County, Burgundy and other Pinot Noir growing areas.

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