

**Media Release**

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**CHURCH ROAD RESERVE SYRAH 2007  
WINS TOP TROPHY AT 2008 AIR NEW ZEALAND WINE AWARDS**

- *Syrachs from Hawke's Bay claim top two trophies*
- *18 trophies and 31 elite gold medals awarded across six winegrowing regions*
- *Elite gold medals dominated by Chardonnay and Pinot Noir*

Two Syrahs from Hawke's Bay have claimed the top trophies at the 2008 Air New Zealand Wine Awards.

Church Road Reserve Syrah 2007 has won the Air New Zealand Champion Wine of the Show Trophy.

Crossroads Winery Elms Vineyard Hawke's Bay Reserve Syrah 2007 has won the Bell Gully Champion Sustainable Wine Trophy for sustainably-produced wines.

The Hawke's Bay and Marlborough regions dominated the awards, each claiming eight trophies.

Chair of judges, Steve Smith, Master of Wine (MW), said the two winning wines made a big impression on the 26-strong judging panel.

"The Church Road Reserve Syrah 2007 is an absolutely stunning wine that is world class. This dark brooding black and purple hued wine has an iron fist-like feel to it," Mr Smith said.

"The Crossroads Winery Elms Vineyard Hawke's Bay Reserve Syrah 2007 has a round and granular feel on the palate, with a nose of dark plum, cassis, Asian spice, rose and dried herbs."

He said this is the second year running that Syrah has had an extremely good showing in the Awards. The Trinity Hill Homage Syrah 2006, also from Hawke's Bay, won the Air New Zealand Champion Wine of the Show in 2007.

“The past two years have shown that New Zealand winemakers are producing truly world-class Syrah. It’s a varietal that has huge potential for the New Zealand wine industry. It is an ideal rich red wine partner to the medium-bodied Pinot Noir offering that New Zealand is also incredibly good at.”

In addition to the 18 trophies, 28 elite gold medals and three pure elite gold medals (awarded to sustainably-produced wines) have also been awarded across six winegrowing regions. Elite gold and pure elite gold medals allow the judges to give special recognition to truly outstanding wines among gold medal winners in each class.

The varietals awarded the most elite gold medals were Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, with eight medals each.

“The high number of elite gold medals awarded this year shows that the quality of winemaking in New Zealand is continuing to evolve and improve. We are excited to see a diverse range of varietals being given this special recognition.”

Organised by New Zealand Winegrowers, the Air New Zealand Wine Awards is the country’s most prestigious wine competition. This year’s Awards attracted a record 1,751 entries from New Zealand’s 10 winegrowing regions.

Air New Zealand chief executive, Rob Fyfe, said it was fantastic to see a wide range of varietals, many of which feature in the airline’s award-winning in-flight wine selection, recognised by the judges.

“Air New Zealand is committed to taking the best of New Zealand to the world and we are proud to offer the more than five million international customers that we carry each year a unique taste of New Zealand.”

Wines from Hawke’s Bay claimed eight of the 18 trophies awarded, including the Air New Zealand Champion Wine of Show Trophy and the Bell Gully Champion Sustainable Wine Trophy. The winning wines were: Church Road Reserve Syrah 2007, Crossroads Winery Elms Vineyard Hawke’s Bay Syrah 2007, Vidal Reserve Hawke’s Bay Chardonnay 2007, Villa Maria Single Estate Omahu Gravels Viognier 2007, Selaks The Favourite Merlot Cabernet 2007, Trinity Hill Gimblett Gravels Hawke’s Bay Tempranillo 2007 and Villa Maria Estate Reserve Hawke’s Bay Chardonnay 2006.

Marlborough wines also won eight trophies. The winning wines were: Goldwater Sauvignon Blanc 2008, Daniel Le Brun Blanc de Blanc 2000, Forrest The Doctors' Riesling 2008, Shingle Peak Reserve Pinot Gris 2008, Hunter's Gewurtztraminer 2008, Forrest The Doctors' Noble Chenin Blanc 2008, Nautilus Four Barriques Pinot Noir 2007.

Central Otago wines picked up two trophies, both for Rockburn Pinot Noir 2007.

International judge Nick Stock, who also judged the competition in 2004, said the standard of wines entered into the Air New Zealand Wine Awards never fails to impress.

"Once again I've been impressed by the quality and consistency of the wines at the Air New Zealand Wine Awards. The competition for gold medals, elite gold medals and trophies was phenomenal. The depth and breadth of these champion wines across a convincing range of varieties, regions and styles truly asserts New Zealand's growing reputation as a strong global force," Mr Stock said.

#### **Air New Zealand Wine Awards results and dinner**

The full medal results from the 2008 Air New Zealand Wine Awards are now available at [www.airnzwineawards.co.nz](http://www.airnzwineawards.co.nz) and [www.wineshow.co.nz](http://www.wineshow.co.nz).

The 2008 Air New Zealand Wine Awards were held in Wellington tonight at the TSB Arena, and was attended by 760 guests.

Guests enjoyed the trophy-winning wines accompanied by a six course dinner designed by Air New Zealand's team of Consultant Chefs including Rex Morgan from Citron Restaurant in Wellington; Peter Gordon from The Providores and Tapa Room in London and dine by Peter Gordon and Bellota in Auckland; Geoff Scott from Vinnies Restaurant in Auckland; and Shannon Wrightson, Former Executive Chef at the Fairmont Waterfront Hotel in Vancouver, Canada.

#### **AIR NEW ZEALAND WINE AWARDS 2008 TROPHY WINNERS**

***Air New Zealand Champion Wine of the Show Trophy***  
Church Road Reserve Syrah 2007

***Bell Gully Champion Sustainable Wine Trophy***

Crossroads Winery Elms Vineyard Hawke's Bay Reserve Syrah 2007

***O-I New Zealand Champion Chardonnay Trophy***

Vidal Reserve Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2007

***Guala Closures New Zealand Champion Sauvignon Blanc Trophy***

Goldwater Sauvignon Blanc 2008

***JF Hillebrand New Zealand Ltd Champion Pinot Noir Trophy***

Rockburn Pinot Noir 2007

***Nissan New Zealand Ltd Champion Sparkling Wine Trophy***

Daniel Le Brun Blanc de Blanc 2000

***BDO Spicers Champion Other White Styles & Rosé Trophy***

Villa Maria Estate Single Vineyard Omahu Gravels Viognier 2007

***Business World Travel Champion Cabernet Sauvignon or Merlot/Cabernet Blend Trophy***

Selaks The Favourite Merlot Cabernet 2007

***Fairfax Media Champion Open Red Wine Trophy***

Rockburn Pinot Noir 2007

***Fruitfed Supplies Champion Syrah Trophy***

Church Road Reserve Syrah 2007

***HortResearch Champion Riesling Trophy***

Forrest The Doctors' Riesling 2008

***The Huka Retreats Champion Pinot Gris Trophy***

Shingle Peak Reserve Pinot Gris 2008

***Label and Litho Champion Gewurztraminer Trophy***

Hunter's Gewurztraminer 2008

***New Holland Agriculture Champion Merlot Trophy***

Not awarded\*

***New World Champion Open White Wine Trophy***

Goldwater Sauvignon Blanc 2008

***Newstalk ZB Champion Other Red Styles Trophy***

Trinity Hill Gimblett Gravels Hawke's Bay Tempranillo 2007

***Wineworks Champion Medium Sweet or Sweet Wine Trophy***

Forrest The Doctors' Noble Chenin Blanc 2008

***Corbans Viticulture Champion Exhibition White or Sparkling Wine Trophy***

Villa Maria Estate Reserve Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2006

***Kapiti Champion Exhibition Red Wine Trophy***

Nautilus Four Barriques Pinot Noir 2007

\*Entered wines did not meet gold medal standard in this category

## **PURE ELITE GOLD MEDALS**

Crossroads Winery Elms Vineyard Hawke's Bay Reserve Syrah 2007  
Mission Estate Reserve Syrah 2007  
C J Pask Declaration Syrah 2007

## **ELITE GOLD MEDALS**

### **Riesling**

Allan Scott THE MOORLANDS Marlborough Riesling 2006  
Forrest The Doctors' Riesling 2008  
Hunter's Riesling 2006  
Sanctuary Riesling 2004

### **Sauvignon Blanc**

Drylands Sauvignon Blanc 2008  
Forrest Estate Sauvignon Blanc 2007  
Goldwater Sauvignon Blanc 2008  
Huntaway Reserve Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2008

### **Chardonnay**

Beach House Chardonnay 2007  
Corbans Private Bin Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2006  
Hawkesbridge Sophie's Vineyard Marlborough Chardonnay 2007  
Sacred Hill Wine Thief Series Chardonnay 2007  
Vidal Reserve Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2007  
Villa Maria Estate Reserve Barrique Fermented Chardonnay 2007  
Villa Maria Estate Reserve Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2006  
Villa Maria Estate Single Vineyard Ihumatao Chardonnay 2007

### **Sweet White**

Forrest The Doctors' Noble Chenin Blanc 2008

### **Pinot Noir**

Brennan Pinot Noir 2007  
Judge Rock Pinot Noir 2007  
Leaning Rock Pinot Noir 2006  
Margrain Home Block Pinot Noir 2007  
Nautilus Four Barriques Pinot Noir 2007  
Rockburn Pinot Noir 2007  
Saint Clair Omaka Reserve Pinot Noir 2007  
Villa Maria Estate Single Vineyard Seddon Pinot Noir 2006

### **Syrah**

Church Road Reserve Syrah 2007  
Esk Valley Reserve Syrah 2006  
Vidal Reserve Syrah 2006

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