

AIR NEW ZEALAND 

WINE AWARDS



MEDIA RELEASE

Chardonnay Shines at 2017 Air New Zealand Wine Awards

A Marlborough Chardonnay has won the top prize at the 2017 Air New Zealand Wine Awards.

The Isabel Chardonnay Marlborough 2016 won the prestigious Air New Zealand Champion Wine of the Show trophy, as well as the Rabobank Champion Chardonnay trophy, at an Art Deco inspired awards dinner in Hawke's Bay last night.

Chair of Judges Warren Gibson said the Isabel Chardonnay Marlborough 2016 was a very classy example of the Chardonnay in this year's competition.

"It has a beautiful balance of components with a rich long finish," said Mr Gibson. "It's packed with flavour but still maintains a remarkable lightness on its feet."

The producer of this champion Chardonnay, Isabel Estate Vineyard, is a pioneering winery in Marlborough and planted their first vineyards in 1980. They also have some of the oldest Chardonnay vines in the region. Chief Winemaker Jeremy McKenzie says Isabel Estate Vineyard's philosophy on working the land is simple.

"Respect the soil where the grapes grow and allow the unique characters of each vineyard and variety to be expressed in the final wine."

The second highest accolade of the evening, the O-I New Zealand Reserve Wine of the Show trophy, went to the Dashwood Pinot Noir Marlborough 2016. This impressive Pinot Noir, made by Chief Winemaker Stu Marfell of Foley Family Wines, also won the JF Hillebrand New Zealand Champion Pinot Noir trophy.

"As with many of the best wines in this class there is perfume and length with elegant tannins and a lingering and powerful finish," stated Mr Gibson.

Air New Zealand Chief Operating Officer Bruce Parton says the airline is proud to have sponsored the New Zealand wine industry's official awards for 31 years.

"Through our partnership with New Zealand Winegrowers we are committed to championing the success of the industry right around the world, both through these awards as well as by working together to help grow wine tourism.

"It's been great to see entries from wineries across the country this year and we'd like to congratulate all the medal and trophy winners."

Seventeen trophies were announced at the dinner, which was emceed by Jack Tame and Renee Wright. This year's competition saw over 1,300 wines entered.

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Editors' notes:

The Air New Zealand Wine Awards celebrate excellence in New Zealand winemaking and are widely considered to be the country's most prestigious wine competition. New Zealand Winegrowers, the national organisation for the country's 1,500 grape growers and winemakers, has owned and organised the competition for over 40 years.

For more information visit www.airnzwineawards.co.nz

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Air New Zealand Wine Awards 2017 – Trophy Winners

Air New Zealand Champion Wine of the Show

Isabel Chardonnay Marlborough 2016

O-I New Zealand Reserve Wine of the Show

Dashwood Pinot Noir Marlborough 2016

JF Hillebrand New Zealand Champion Pinot Noir

Dashwood Pinot Noir Marlborough 2016

Label and Litho Limited Champion Sauvignon Blanc

Goldwater Sauvignon Blanc Wairau Valley Marlborough 2017

Rabobank Champion Chardonnay

Isabel Chardonnay Marlborough 2016

Dish Magazine Champion Open Red Wine

Dashwood Pinot Noir Marlborough 2016

Bayleys Real Estate Champion Merlot, Cabernet and Blends
Villa Maria Cellar Selection Organic Merlot Hawke's Bay 2016

Fruitfed Supplies Champion Syrah
Coopers Creek Reserve Syrah Hawke's Bay 2016

Guala Closures New Zealand Champion Pinot Gris
Saddleback Pinot Gris Central Otago 2017

New World Champion Open White Wine
Goldwater Sauvignon Blanc Wairau Valley Marlborough 2017

New Zealand Winegrowers Champion Sweet Wine
Forrest Botrytised Riesling Marlborough 2016

Plant & Food Research Champion Riesling
Mount Riley Riesling Marlborough 2017

Quay Connect Champion Other White Styles
Nautilus Albariño Marlborough 2017

Riedel New Zealand Champion Gewürztraminer
Lawson's Dry Hills Gewürztraminer Marlborough 2016

WineWorks Champion Sparkling Wine
Aotea by the Seifried Family Méthode Traditionnelle Nelson NV

New Zealand Winegrowers Champion Exhibition White or Sparkling Wine
Isabel Wild Barrique Chardonnay Marlborough 2016

New Holland Agriculture Champion Exhibition Red Wine
Falcon Ridge Estate Syrah Nelson 2016