



LOWBURN FERRY

CENTRAL OTAGO

August 2012: Grand Jury Européen Rates Lowburn Ferry Amongst Top Pinot Noirs in the World

The inaugural reserve pinot noir from boutique Central Otago producer Lowburn Ferry has received an outstanding ovation from a panel of international tasters known as the Grand Jury Européen (GJE).

14 GJE tasters recently held a special session in Paris about the styles of various pinots noirs coming from various countries in the world : France, Italy, Switzerland, New Zealand, USA, Argentina, and Germany. Invited producers were asked to provide a wine representing a vintage between 2000 and 2010.

The lineup of 33 international pinot noir wines included Lowburn Ferry "The Ferryman" Reserve Pinot Noir from Central Otago, as well as three other iconic New Zealand brands from Central Otago, Martinborough and Marlborough.

The blind tasting did not include some top names from France, as the "grand crus" and "premier crus" from Burgundy were considered to be the benchmark for the fickle pinot noir variety – and the top ranking wines from the GJE June tasting would go forward to be blind tasted against those at a later date.

"Nevertheless : we were more than pleased with some high level wines from outside France, and your wine is clearly inside the first half of our selection. No doubt that pinot noir has a future in your country," GJE founder and president François Mauss wrote in his summary sent to Lowburn Ferry Wines.

"Pinot noir is a "graal" (holy grail) and we have respect for those who want to achieve, like you, a great result with this vine."

"I must say that on our 14 tasters, 6 tasters put your wine inside the 5 best : bravo ! Obviously, your country, like Oregon and Germany, is able to produce great pinot noir with finesse, complexity, a real fruit and avoiding all excess as noticed too many times. pinot noir does not accept mediocrity : this is the reason it is so difficult to manage it !" Mr Mauss said

The Grand Jury Européen regularly assembles a minimum of 12 permanent members from at least 6 countries of the European Union and Switzerland for blind tastings held under strict protocol. The concept was originally developed to provide an alternative ranking to Robert Parker's rankings.

Mr Mauss is also the founder of the annual World Wine Symposium held in Italy, formed to create a global reference forum for the world of fine wine. The GJE tasting blog can be viewed at: <http://gje.mabulle.com/index.php/2012/07/02/205351-la-session-du-gje-sur-le-pinot-noir-4>

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Lowburn Ferry is the area surrounding an historic ferry crossing over the mighty Clutha River in Central Otago. Lowburn Ferry vineyard was established in 2000, nestled on a sheltered north facing terrace in the Lowburn Valley beneath the Pisa Range. Owners Roger and Jean Gibson have academic backgrounds in soil science and horticulture, and are totally focused on producing the best pinot noir wine from their special site in the Lowburn Valley. Most of the production from their 3.5ha site is exported throughout Australia, Asia, Europe and North America. The award winning pinot noirs are also sold direct from the winery, fine wine stores and selected fine dining restaurants throughout New Zealand..

“We've always felt our block in the Lowburn Valley is a little special. Deep loess silt soils unusually high in organic matter give us the essential ingredients to start working from to produce great grapes,” says co-owner and viticulturalist Roger Gibson. The couple also attributed the success to a good working relationship with the winemaking team at Vinpro under the direction of Pete Bartle.



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