

THE SOMMELIER JOURNAL

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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT RHÔNE VALLEY VINEYARDS

CÔTES DU RHÔNE
CONTINUES TO REFINE
ITS APPELLATION
STRUCTURE



*Côtes du Rhône is the ideal
wine for the relaxed, be
yourself vibe of summer.*

PHOTO: RAUQUE DANIEL



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{ varietals }



REGION AND COUNTRY: Alta Langa DOCG, Piemonte, Italy

THE WINE: Cuvée Aurora Rosé (SRP \$27)

THE PANELIST: Lars Leicht, Banfi Vintners

Not only is Alta Langa a new appellation in Italy, created in 2011, but this Pinot Noir comes to life as a sparkling rosé. Close to a *brut nature* in style, with only five grams of residual sugar, it's made from grapes grown in a cool spot high up on hilltop vineyards along the Langa River just south of Alba and produced in the classical method of in-bottle fermentation. The grapes, harvested in mid-September, only go through one hour of skin contact and are fermented at low temperatures for 30–40 days in stainless steel. The wine is aged 30 months in the bottle.

Its hue is onion skin pink and delivers a mineral-threaded raspberry, watermelon, rose petals and apple flavor profile. Alcohol is under 12 percent. The tertiary notes of vanilla and stone are beautiful. Imported by Banfi Vintners.



REGION AND COUNTRY: Bourgogne, France

THE WINE: Domaine de la Vougeraie 2013 Terres de Famille (SRP \$50)

THE PANELIST: Lisa Brown, Boisset Collection

Pinot Noir has a 900-year history from the soils of Bourgogne, and this particular wine brings together the members of one family—led by Jean-Charles Boisset. In fact, the name of the Domaine refers to the Boisset family home, and the name of the wine is translated as “Lands of the Family.” The grapes hail from the family’s vines in the Côte de Nuits and the Côte de Beaune, including one vineyard in view of the Clos de Vougeot. Aged ten months in gently toasted barrels, the wine was blended with certain village wines, from Beaune and Gevrey-Chambertin, before bottling.

Biodynamically farmed, this delicate red showcases gorgeous mineral-laden roses, Cherry and cinnamon intermingle with a tart pomegranate.



REGION AND COUNTRY: Wairau Valley, Marlborough, New Zealand

THE WINE: Giesen 2013 Clayvin Pinot Noir (SRP \$65)

THE PANELIST: Chuck Hayward, Vinroads

While Giesen Wines owns 13 Marlborough vineyards, each with different soil, aspect, water and elevations, Clayvin, one of Giesen’s single-vineyard selections, was the region’s first significant hillside vineyard. It is organically farmed in high-density plantings, resulting in concentrated fruit.

“Pinot Noir accounts for only six percent of grape varieties planted Marlborough,” stated panelist Chuck Hayward, who represented the brand on the panel. “While Sauvignon Blanc has been the Big Man on Campus this far, it’s the beginning of a new age for Pinot Noir in New Zealand and this wine, with its pedigreed vineyard, is a window to its future. Clayvin is one of the first wines from New Zealand to search for Grand Cru and itself is thought of as similar to a Premier Cru site.”

Soil types vary from deep silty gravel to its loamy top soil, rich in organic matter. Plushly textured with feathery tannins, its weightless density on the tongue is a phenomenon. White pepper and savory fruit accompany cherry, rhubarb and a hint of sarsaparilla. This rich-style wine (14.5% ABV) shows intensity and great aging potential. Imported by Pacific Highway.

(Left to right) David Coventry, Winemaker for Talbott Vineyards; Lisa N. Brown, Brand Manager, Boisset Collection; Chuck Hayward, Proprietor, Vinroads; Anthony Dias Blue, Editor-in-Chief, The Somm Journal; Jennie Dallery, Brand Ambassador, Domaine Anderson; Sarah Mayo, North American Manager, Rathbone Wine Group; Allyson Gorsuch, Advanced Sommelier/Deputy Editor, The Somm Journal; and Lars Leicht, Trade Development Director, Banfi Vintners.



“I’ve been a Pinot Noir fanatic all my life, my father took me to Burgundy when I was 11 years old.”

—ANTHONY DIAS BLUE