

FINE WINES OF NEW ZEALAND

CHARTER



“A great wine isn't the result of
a bit of luck and a good vintage,
it's years of hard work and
complex perseverance.”

Simon Nash
MASTER OF WINE





HISTORY

Like lots of great ideas, this one came from a discussion over a great meal and spectacular wine with a group of New Zealand's Masters of Wine & Master Sommelier.

The starting point was how we could collectively ensure that New Zealand wine continued to chase excellence in quality and could one day be seen an equal amongst the best in the world.

PROPOSAL

The proposal from the Masters of Wine and Master Sommelier was to "create a definitive list of New Zealand's best wines and wineries, independently chosen, showcasing provenance, consistency, excellence in winemaking and demonstrated evolution of fine wine production."

Air New Zealand agreed to act as patron (The Patron) to an annual tasting and assist with the marketing and development of the programme.

Each year a group (The Group) of seven wine experts (six Masters of Wine and one Master Sommelier) will assess any new submissions and existing wines to form that year's selection of the 'Fine Wines of New Zealand'.

Members of The Group will hold a qualification of Master of Wine or Master Sommelier and will decide, in conjunction with The Patron, the number and participants in The Group and replacements when needed.

Additional to The Group, Air New Zealand's Wine Consultants will also attend the annual tasting in their capacity to identify wines that will be suitable for inflight use.

The Air New Zealand Wine Consultants as representatives of The Patron have no part in the selection of the Fine Wines of New Zealand list, but will select what wines from that list will suit being onboard Air New Zealand aircraft.

In the formative years of the Fine Wines of New Zealand programme, each expert was allocated a variety/style of wine and created a short list of wines to be tasted and assessed by The Group.

Current variety/styles are:

- Sauvignon Blanc
- Chardonnay
- Aromatic varieties (Pinot Gris, Gewürztraminer, Riesling, Pinot Blanc, Albarino)
- Pinot Noir
- Syrah
- Bordeaux blends
- Bottle fermented Sparkling wines
- Sweet wines

Now into its third annual assessment new submissions were accepted for wines that met the following criteria:

- Demonstrated excellence in wine making
- Have at least seven years of production
- Regarded either as an iconic wine or wine deserving inclusion

The wine expert allocated that variety or style will be primarily responsible for compiling the short list of new submissions to taste, but will give due regard and weight to suggestions from the rest of The Group.

The short list compiled for each variety/style will be circulated in advance to The Group for their comments and any suggested additions before the selection tasting.

The process of selection will be:

- The Masters of Wine and Master Sommelier will collectively taste all new submissions and their previous 2 releases blind. A collective average rating of 95 points and above will bring that submission forward for further assessments alongside the existing Fine Wines of New Zealand.
- The Masters of Wine and Master Sommelier will then collectively taste all existing Fine Wines of New Zealand alongside any new submissions that have passed the tasting assessment. The wines will again be tasted blind.

- For a wine to transition from tasting to having its label revealed it must first receive a unanimous decision on its quality. Following this process The Group will determine the label's pedigree and provenance.
- Once The Group are in agreement the final list of Fine Wines of New Zealand for that year will be compiled and signed off.
- In the event of a conflict of interest on a wine under consideration of pedigree and provenance, the conflicted party shall withdraw their voice and vote and the acceptance of that wine must be by consensus of The Group.
- In a situation whereby a current Fine Wines of New Zealand is felt to have not met the current standard of selection, in the first year of this occurring the wine will still be given the Fine Wines of New Zealand accolade but will receive notice of this, followed by a phone call explaining why. If the wine following the blind assessment reaches a

unanimous decision by the group and isn't of high enough quality two years in a row that wine will be removed from the Fine Wines of New Zealand programme for 3 years.

- The Chair of the Group in conjunction with the wine experts responsible for each variety/style will be required to provide feedback on any wines that do not meet the quality level regarding potential selection issues going forward or non-selection. Other than that, all aspects of the tasting and discussion are confidential to The Group and will not be released to the public or wine trade.

Fine Wines of New Zealand will notify the wineries on behalf of The Group that they have been selected for the new Fine Wines of New Zealand list, and arrange the following to be delivered;

- Letter of congratulations signed by The Group.
- An appropriately engraved Fine Wines of New Zealand trophy for each successful wine.

- Toolkit with information on how to install the trophy and how to get the best out of the programme.
- Charter document outlining the intent of the programme and selection process.
- Once the Fine Wines of New Zealand list has been agreed and signed off by The Group, Air New Zealand may approach wineries that are on the list, with a view to purchasing those wines. Air New Zealand will serve some of the Fine Wines of New Zealand list onboard the aircraft as well as look to hold stock in cellar for those wines where that is deemed most appropriate.
- Only wines and vintages that have been selected as part of Fine Wines of New Zealand may be advertised/associated with Fine Wines of New Zealand.

Air New Zealand is seeking to make the Fine Wines of New Zealand brand as well as each of the wineries selected for the Fine Wines of New Zealand programme better known and commercially advantaged through this programme.

These options will include:

Domestic:

- Fine Wines of New Zealand promotions in key locations such as Hawke's Bay (e.g F.A.W.C!), Auckland, Wellington Queenstown.
- The sale to customers of Fine Wines of New Zealand wines via the Airpoints™ and Air New Zealand Wine Store.
- A Fine Wines of New Zealand website with links to each of the chosen wineries to facilitate the spread of the brand and ultimate purchase of the wines or other products that they offer.
- The use of Fine Wines of New Zealand wines at key Air New Zealand corporate functions, such as the annual parliamentary function.

International:

- The serving of small exclusive quantities (2-3 bottles) of Fine Wines of New Zealand onboard international flights as a part of the Business Premier™ service.
- The sale to customers of Fine Wines of New Zealand wines onboard the aircraft, via the Inflight Entertainment system, via the Airpoints™ Store and Air New Zealand Wine Store.
- The Inflight Entertainment system is loaded with content applicable to the story and brands of the wineries.
- A Fine Wines of New Zealand website with links to each of the chosen wineries to facilitate the spread of the brand and ultimate purchase of the wines or other products that they offer.
- The use of Fine Wines of New Zealand wines at key Air New Zealand corporate functions. Engagement for one off events in offshore regions leveraging other partnership activities such as NZ Winegrowers activities and Masters of Wine/Master Sommelier led events.
- Working with the wineries and wine masters to better promote the wines when in offshore regions.

AIR NEW ZEALAND INVOLVEMENT

Air New Zealand should be seen in this charter as being a supporter of high quality New Zealand wine, as part of its 'Go Beyond' business strategy, of which being an advocate for New Zealand businesses is a critical part.

At a practical level, Air New Zealand is a patron, aiming to produce an outcome where New Zealand wineries look to produce the best wine they possibly can.


In a similar manner to the Michelin Star Restaurant classifications (of which Michelin tyres have little to do with restaurants any more), Air New Zealand funds the programme and provides a framework for it to work best (in so far as promotional activities etc.).

Air New Zealand is not involved in the selection of the Fine Wines of New Zealand list.

Air New Zealand will put a selection of the wines onboard aircraft as part of the promotion of the Fine Wines of New Zealand programme. That selection will not be financially based (the most expensive wines in the list have frequently been onboard) but will be down to two key reasons:

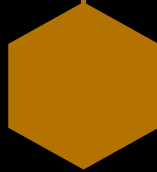
1. Some of the wines are simply not available in reasonable bottle numbers (and some are entirely pre allocated) making it impossible to purchase or manage. In this case these wines are still selected as a Fine Wine of New Zealand due to their quality but can't be promoted onboard Air New Zealand aircraft.
2. Some wines simply do not taste well at altitude due to the changes in a person's taste buds. It does not help Air New Zealand or the winery for wine to be featured poorly. Gewürztraminer is a prime example of this, where the wine type exhibits an unpleasant odour in the air.

Other businesses such as restaurants, hotels etc. are able to promote and use the Fine Wines of New Zealand label and accolade as part of their sale of the selected wines.



“This is a first for New Zealand.
I don’t think anything like this
has been attempted before.”

John Belsham
WINEMAKER & AIR NEW ZEALAND
WINE CONSULTANT



finewines.nz

SUPPORTED BY

AIR NEW ZEALAND 

The Air New Zealand logo, which consists of a stylized white bird in flight, is positioned to the right of the text "AIR NEW ZEALAND".