

Chardonnay summit



NZ chardonnays

TOP

10

★★★★★

- 1 Corbans Cottage Block Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2009, \$39
- 2 Villa Maria Single Vineyard Ihumatao Chardonnay 2010, \$36-\$40
- 3 Villa Maria Reserve Barrique Fermented Gisborne Chardonnay 2010, \$36-\$40
- 4 Man O' War Valhalla Chardonnay 2010, \$40
- 5 Giesen The Brothers Marlborough Chardonnay 2010, \$25
- 6 Black Barn Vineyards Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2010, \$28-\$30
- 7 Craggy Range Chardonnay Gimblett Gravels Vineyard Hawke's Bay 2010, \$31.95
- 8 Villa Maria Reserve Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2010, \$29-\$32
- 9 Vidal Legacy Series Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2010, \$50-\$54
- 10 John Forrest Collection Chardonnay 2007, \$40-\$50

BEST BUYS

★★★★★

- Giesen The Brothers Marlborough Chardonnay 2010, \$25 (no 5 in Top 10)
- Black Barn Vineyards Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2010, \$28-\$30 (no 6 in Top 10)
- Villa Maria Reserve Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2010, \$29-\$32 (no 8 in Top 10)
- ★★★★½
- 900 Grapes Marlborough Chardonnay 2011, \$13-\$20
- Dusky Sounds Waipara Valley Chardonnay 2011, \$18
- Lone Tree Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2010, \$13-\$15
- Main Divide Chardonnay 2009, \$18-\$21
- Matua Valley Gisborne Chardonnay 2011, \$10-\$19
- ★★★★
- Mission Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2010, \$12-\$20
- Mission Vineyard Selection Chardonnay 2010, \$15-\$22
- Morton Estate Three Vineyards Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2009, \$12-\$19.95
- Old Coach Road Nelson Unoaked Chardonnay 2011, \$16-\$20
- Rongopai East Coast Chardonnay 2010, \$11-\$13
- Saint Clair Vicar's Choice Chardonnay 2011 (Marlborough) \$17.50-19.50
- Whitehaven Marlborough Chardonnay 2010, \$18.95-\$22.95

Gold rush: New Zealand chardonnays are now making waves internationally.

Giveaway

WE HAVE two six-bottle cases of Corbans Cottage Block Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2009 to give away. To enter, email escape@star-times.co.nz by Friday, April 20, with Cuisine Chardonnay in the subject line. Entrants must be over 18 years of age.



The latest issue of *Cuisine* looks to autumn, with warming pumpkin recipes, delicious apple desserts and simple but clever ideas for pasta. There are slow-cooked dishes for cosy nights in, plus plenty of cakes, biscuits and tarts to satisfy sweet tooth. The *Cuisine* wine panel reveals its top chardonnay and viognier picks, there's a lowdown on the hottest places to eat in the Peruvian capital, Lima, and you'll also find the annual *Cuisine* recipe index. All this and much more in the May issue of *Cuisine*, on sale Monday.

favourite wine would accompany him to the highest point on earth. He had studied classics and after a sip at the summit, "offered the wine to the mountain as a libation".

A wine with strong links to Japan was also recognised by the

panel in the four-star stakes: Osawa Wines Prestige Collection Chardonnay 2010. A love of wine originally drew Taizo Osawa, a construction tycoon from the city of Shiga, to Hawke's Bay. He bought land and began planting vines at Marakakabe in 2006 and

a year later hired respected Hawke's Bay vigneron Rod McDonald as his consultant winemaker. Osawa is particularly fond of two varieties, chardonnay and pinot noir, and is loving the results McDonald is achieving with both.

New Zealand chardonnay is scaling new heights, reports John Saker.

A MOUNTAIN of chardonnay awaited the *Cuisine* panel at its latest tasting. With 49 of 153 wines achieving four stars or more in the annual New Zealand chardonnay review, it was apparent that the recent trend towards more elegant wines is only gathering strength. Adding to the excitement is the breadth of styles now on offer. Said panel chair John Belsham, "The diversity of styles is a fantastic development. Often a wine panel can spend much of its time discussing quality issues. This time we were instead comparing the merits of various styles. For many years, New Zealand chardonnay was only making a ripple - now it's making waves. We have moved from making drink-now wines to producing world-class wines that will last." Added *Cuisine's* Melbourne-based judge and wine writer Ralph Kyte-Powell, "New Zealand chardonnay has come of age."

Certainly, chardonnay has moved on from when the oaky butter bomb ruled with little dissent. Those wines are still there but now we also have the fruit-forward, dry and friendly style, the lean and flinty style and the bronzed stonefruit and honeypuff style, to name just some. And because it's a grape that invites a high level of winemaker input, expect the chardonnay style

spectrum to keep growing.

Cuisine's top wine won by a nose, and then some. The overt, hazelnut and flint aromatics offered by Corbans Cottage Block Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2009 introduce a surprisingly gentle, juicy, citrusy presence in the mouth. "You just want to keep tasting it," said judge Olly Masters. "Excellent fruit has been balanced by a subtle winemaking hand," added Kyte-Powell. "It's harmonious and exciting."

Chardonnay master Villa Maria was once again in contention for the top spot, with its Auckland-grown Single Vineyard Ihumatao Chardonnay 2010 ranked number two in the Top 10, followed closely by the 2010 vintage of last year's winner, Villa Maria Reserve Barrique Fermented Gisborne Chardonnay. Also a Best Buy at \$29-\$32, Villa's Reserve Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2010 took the number eight slot in the Top 10.

Another top scorer awarded fourth place in the Top 10, Man O' War Valhalla Chardonnay can also lay claim to being the only New Zealand chardonnay to reach the top of the world. On 22 May 2010, Kiwi mountaineer Johnny Davison guided 12 clients to the summit of Everest.

It was back in Auckland, when preparing for the expedition, that Davison decided a small plastic bottle of what had become his