

the wine lover's  
tasting journal  
FOR RED WINE



Your easy-use guide to wine tasting is based on edited extracts from  
a number of wine books by Michael Cooper

tasting wine ———  
anyone can do it

“The first duty of any wine is to be red.” I forget who first said that, but I know what he or she meant. In terms of richness and personality—and for the sheer pleasure and satisfaction they offer—around the world red wines are generally regarded as the ultimate.

Not long ago, New Zealanders typically preferred white wines—at first fruity and slightly sweet, then full-bodied and dry. Now, we are fast acquiring an appetite for the dry, deep-flavoured wines the Spanish and Portuguese call tinto, the Italians rosso, and the French rouge.

Pinot Noir and Merlot, spreading swiftly, are the country's third and fourth most widely planted varieties, with Cabernet Sauvignon in fifth place. Other up-and-coming red-wine grapes include Shiraz (known as Syrah in France) and Malbec. The stylish Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon-based reds of Hawke's Bay, and the richly varietal Pinot Noirs of southern regions, rank among New Zealand's greatest wines.

Shiraz has long flourished in Australia. Top models, especially the powerful, flavour-crammed reds of the warmer South Australian regions, have long been popular in New Zealand and are now famous worldwide.

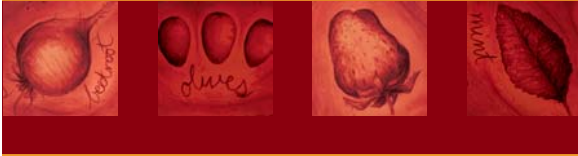
To get started on your red-wine tasting path, just flip through the pages of the journal, picking two or three wines of each variety to compare. Read the guidelines on how to taste like a wine pro on the opposite page, and invite a few friends around to join you in the tasting. Many people are eager to boost their wine knowledge, and wine is a great social lubricant.

Each year, when the weather cools, our red-wine consumption soars. While winter rages outside, robust, richly flavoured reds warm your soul and are the perfect partner for hearty food.

Happy tasting!

*Michael Cooper*

If you'd like further copies of the journal, contact Montana Wines on 0800 109922. We also have copies of the earlier Wine Lover's Tasting Journal for White & Sparkling Wines.



# how to use this tasting journal

## before you start

To show each of the wines off at their best, select clear glasses with a stem and a large bowl tapering at the top. Clear glass lets you see the colour of the wine. If you hold the glass by its stem, your hands won't warm the bowl and raise the temperature of the wine (a good idea if the wine is too cool). A generous bowl allows plenty of air-space for the aromas and flavours to develop.

Serving temperature is important. It is amazing how serving a wine too warm or too cool can reduce its appeal. For a red-wine tasting, room temperature is normal, but room temperatures vary from place to place and with the time of year. At cooler temperatures, your palate becomes more sensitive to tannins. A red wine that tastes supple at 18°C, can taste astringent at 10°C. Light, soft reds can be served cool, but young, tannic reds designed for ageing should be served relatively warm, at 15 to 18°C.

### APPEARANCE

COLOUR	DEPTH
purple	light
ruby	medium
brick red	deep
red-brown	opaque
mahogany	

## appearance

Hold the glass at an angle against a white background. The colour is often most obvious along the rim of the wine. Young red wine has a vivid purple hue. (Deep, almost opaque colour is usually a sign that the wine is drenched with flavour and tannin.) As the wine ages, it loses its purple flush and turns ruby, then brick-red. Red-brown colour reveals the wine has reached

a degree of maturity, and a mahogany tinge suggests it has achieved full maturity. For each wine, we have given you colour options and indications of the depth of colour. Simply circle the descriptions you find most appropriate.

## bouquet

To savour the bouquet, gently swirl the wine in the glass and take a deep sniff. With experience you can recognise the characteristic aromas of the various grape varieties, the influence of oak or the impact of bottle-ageing. Apart from finding the apt categories for the style and intensity of the bouquet, you may want to circle some of the flavours in the right-hand column as well.

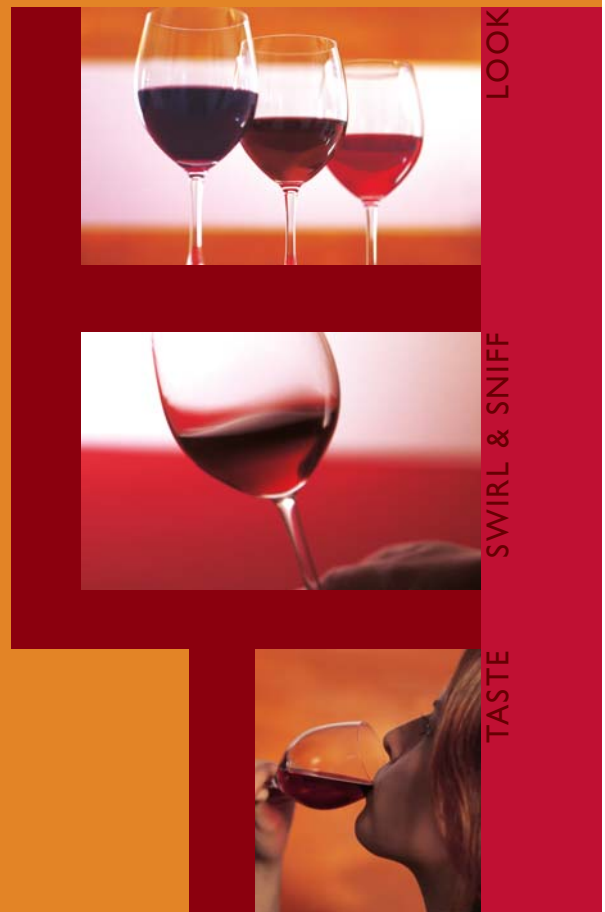
## palate

Finally, take a sip of the wine and move it around in your mouth. Is the wine full-bodied or light, strong or weak in flavour, firm or soft? Pinot Noir is typically lighter in body, with more gentle tannins, than Cabernet Sauvignon or Shiraz, but all three should show good flavour intensity. Does the flavour of the wine fade soon after it has been swallowed or—the hallmark of a top-flight wine—does it linger? Mark your assessment in the Flavour Depth column. You may also identify some more flavours at this stage.

Balance is crucial: all the key elements in a wine should be in harmony. For instance, a moderate level of acidity can enhance the fresh, vibrant fruitiness of a drink-young red, but too much acidity can taste tart. A red wine matured in new oak barrels needs rich, concentrated fruit flavours if the strong wood influence is not to swamp it. Give your verdict in the Balance column.

## comment

Here is where you can give an overall opinion or note aspects not covered before. The ultimate test is, do you want another glass?



# beguiling pinot noir

With an array of notably perfumed, richly flavoured and supple wines, Pinot Noir has staked its claim to be New Zealand's star red wine of the future. The great red-wine grape of Burgundy thrives in cool-climate regions, including Martinborough, Marlborough and Central Otago. By far our most widely planted red variety, Pinot Noir is typically full but not dense in colour; in its youth tasting of cherries, raspberries and strawberries. Mature Pinot Noir can be highly complex, with a beguiling array of aromas and flavours suggestive of red berry fruits, violets, coffee and mushrooms.



MONTANA  
MARLBOROUGH PINOT NOIR

APPEARANCE	COLOUR	DEPTH	BOUQUET	STYLE	PALATE	FLAVOUR DEPTH	FLAVOURS
	purple	light		simple		moderate	
ruby	medium	moderately complex	good	plum	spicy		
brick red	deep	complex	outstanding	strawberry	forest floor		
red-brown	opaque	INTENSITY	BALANCE	raspberry	gamey		
mahogany	low/moderate	out of balance	truffle	mocha			
	high	balanced	beetroot	mushroom			
			barnyard	nut			

COMMENTS



STONELEIGH  
MARLBOROUGH PINOT NOIR

APPEARANCE	COLOUR	DEPTH	BOUQUET	STYLE	PALATE	FLAVOUR DEPTH	FLAVOURS
	purple	light		simple		moderate	
ruby	medium	moderately complex	good	plum	spicy		
brick red	deep	complex	outstanding	strawberry	forest floor		
red-brown	opaque	INTENSITY	BALANCE	raspberry	gamey		
mahogany	low/moderate	out of balance	truffle	mocha			
	high	balanced	beetroot	mushroom			
			barnyard	nut			

COMMENTS



CORBANS PRIVATE BIN  
MARLBOROUGH PINOT NOIR

APPEARANCE	COLOUR	DEPTH	BOUQUET	STYLE	PALATE	FLAVOUR DEPTH	FLAVOURS
	purple	light		simple		moderate	
ruby	medium	moderately complex	good	plum	spicy		
brick red	deep	complex	outstanding	strawberry	forest floor		
red-brown	opaque	INTENSITY	BALANCE	raspberry	gamey		
mahogany	low/moderate	out of balance	truffle	mocha			
	high	balanced	beetroot	mushroom			
			barnyard	nut			

COMMENTS



GIBBSTON VALLEY  
CENTRAL OTAGO PINOT NOIR

APPEARANCE	COLOUR	DEPTH	BOUQUET	STYLE	PALATE	FLAVOUR DEPTH	FLAVOURS
	purple	light		simple		moderate	
ruby	medium	moderately complex	good	plum	spicy		
brick red	deep	complex	outstanding	strawberry	forest floor		
red-brown	opaque	INTENSITY	BALANCE	raspberry	gamey		
mahogany	low/moderate	out of balance	truffle	mocha			
	high	balanced	beetroot	mushroom			
			barnyard	nut			

COMMENTS



# alluring merlot

Merlot produces red wines of alluring richness, plumpness and suppleness. With its early ripening nature—two to three weeks ahead of Cabernet Sauvignon—Merlot grapes achieve higher sugar levels, lower acidity and riper fruit flavours. Until a few years ago, Merlot's key role was that of a minority blending variety, bringing a floral, plummy fruitiness and soft, mouth-filling richness to its marriages with the firmer Cabernet Sauvignon. Now, with the fast-rising stream of straight Merlots and Merlot-dominant blends, this classic Bordeaux variety has been recognised as a top-flight wine in its own right.



LONGRIDGE HAWKE'S BAY  
MERLOT CABERNET

APPEARANCE	COLOUR	DEPTH	BOUQUET	STYLE	PALATE	FLAVOUR DEPTH	FLAVOURS		
	purple	light		simple		moderate		cherry	earthy
	ruby	medium	moderately complex	good	plum	spicy			
	brick red	deep	complex	outstanding	blackcurrant	leafy			
	red-brown	opaque			raspberry	leather			
			INTENSITY	BALANCE	floral	fruitcake			
	mahogany		low/moderate	out of balance	coffee	chocolate			
			high	balanced	nutty	toast			

COMMENTS



MONTANA RESERVE  
MARLBOROUGH MERLOT

APPEARANCE	COLOUR	DEPTH	BOUQUET	STYLE	PALATE	FLAVOUR DEPTH	FLAVOURS		
	purple	light		simple		moderate		cherry	earthy
	ruby	medium	moderately complex	good	plum	spicy			
	brick red	deep	complex	outstanding	blackcurrant	leafy			
	red-brown	opaque			raspberry	leather			
			INTENSITY	BALANCE	floral	fruitcake			
	mahogany		low/moderate	out of balance	coffee	chocolate			
			high	balanced	nutty	toast			

COMMENTS



HUNTAWAY RESERVE  
MARLBOROUGH HAWKE'S BAY  
MERLOT CABERNET SAUVIGNON

APPEARANCE	COLOUR	DEPTH	BOUQUET	STYLE	PALATE	FLAVOUR DEPTH	FLAVOURS		
	purple	light		simple		moderate		cherry	earthy
	ruby	medium	moderately complex	good	plum	spicy			
	brick red	deep	complex	outstanding	blackcurrant	leafy			
	red-brown	opaque			raspberry	leather			
			INTENSITY	BALANCE	floral	fruitcake			
	mahogany		low/moderate	out of balance	coffee	chocolate			
			high	balanced	nutty	toast			

COMMENTS



CHURCH ROAD RESERVE  
HAWKE'S BAY MERLOT CABERNET

APPEARANCE	COLOUR	DEPTH	BOUQUET	STYLE	PALATE	FLAVOUR DEPTH	FLAVOURS		
	purple	light		simple		moderate		cherry	earthy
	ruby	medium	moderately complex	good	plum	spicy			
	brick red	deep	complex	outstanding	blackcurrant	leafy			
	red-brown	opaque			raspberry	leather			
			INTENSITY	BALANCE	floral	fruitcake			
	mahogany		low/moderate	out of balance	coffee	chocolate			
			high	balanced	nutty	toast			

COMMENTS



# fragrant cabernet sauvignon

Cabernet Sauvignon is to the red-wine world what Chardonnay is to the white: wine of impeccable pedigree and huge popularity. In New Zealand, Cabernet Sauvignon has generally performed best in the warmth of Hawke's Bay, where in favourable vintages the great Bordeaux variety yields fragrant, sturdy wine with complexity and longevity. Blackcurrant and herb characters, new oak and a backbone of firm tannin are all hallmarks of fine young Cabernet Sauvignon, whose drink-young appeal is often enhanced by blending with Merlot. With bottle age, Cabernet-based reds develop impressive complexity and roundness.



CORBANS  
CABERNET SAUVIGNON MERLOT

APPEARANCE	COLOUR	DEPTH	BOUQUET	STYLE	PALATE	FLAVOUR DEPTH	FLAVOURS
	purple	light		simple		moderate	
ruby	medium	moderately complex	good	plum	spicy		
brick red	deep	complex	outstanding	blackcurrant	leafy		
red-brown	opaque	INTENSITY	BALANCE	capsicum	mint		
mahogany	low/moderate	out of balance	herbaceous	olive			
	high	balanced	cigar box	chocolate			
			toasty	liquorice			

COMMENTS



SAINTS  
CABERNET SAUVIGNON MERLOT

APPEARANCE	COLOUR	DEPTH	BOUQUET	STYLE	PALATE	FLAVOUR DEPTH	FLAVOURS
	purple	light		simple		moderate	
ruby	medium	moderately complex	good	plum	spicy		
brick red	deep	complex	outstanding	blackcurrant	leafy		
red-brown	opaque	INTENSITY	BALANCE	capsicum	mint		
mahogany	low/moderate	out of balance	herbaceous	olive			
	high	balanced	cigar box	chocolate			
			toasty	liquorice			

COMMENTS



C.J. PASK GIMBLETT ROAD  
CABERNET MERLOT

APPEARANCE	COLOUR	DEPTH	BOUQUET	STYLE	PALATE	FLAVOUR DEPTH	FLAVOURS
	purple	light		simple		moderate	
ruby	medium	moderately complex	good	plum	spicy		
brick red	deep	complex	outstanding	blackcurrant	leafy		
red-brown	opaque	INTENSITY	BALANCE	capsicum	mint		
mahogany	low/moderate	out of balance	herbaceous	olive			
	high	balanced	cigar box	chocolate			
			toasty	liquorice			

COMMENTS



FAIRHALL ESTATE MARLBOROUGH  
CABERNET SAUVIGNON

APPEARANCE	COLOUR	DEPTH	BOUQUET	STYLE	PALATE	FLAVOUR DEPTH	FLAVOURS
	purple	light		simple		moderate	
ruby	medium	moderately complex	good	plum	spicy		
brick red	deep	complex	outstanding	blackcurrant	leafy		
red-brown	opaque	INTENSITY	BALANCE	capsicum	mint		
mahogany	low/moderate	out of balance	herbaceous	olive			
	high	balanced	cigar box	chocolate			
			toasty	liquorice			

COMMENTS



# robust shiraz

Shiraz typically yields robust, richly flavoured reds with a heady perfume. In Australia, where it is the most extensively planted red-wine variety, top versions are almost opaque, with a characteristic spicy, black pepper aroma and flavour. The powerful, concentrated Shirazes of the Barossa Valley and McLaren Vale are recognised as among Australia's greatest gifts to the wine world. Grenache—like Shiraz a traditional grape variety of the Rhône Valley, where the two are often blended—also yields some exciting wines in Australia, especially from old, unirrigated, bush-pruned vines.



MONTANA BAROSSA SHIRAZ

APPEARANCE	COLOUR	DEPTH	BOUQUET	STYLE	PALATE	FLAVOUR DEPTH	FLAVOURS		
	purple	light		simple		moderate		liquorice	earthy
	ruby	medium	moderately complex	good	plum	spicy			
	brick red	deep	complex	outstanding	blackcurrant	prune			
	red-brown	opaque			coffee	gamey			
			INTENSITY	BALANCE	raspberry	raisin			
			low/moderate	out of balance	black pepper	chocolate			
			high	balanced	toasty	nutty			

COMMENTS



SAINTS BAROSSA SHIRAZ

APPEARANCE	COLOUR	DEPTH	BOUQUET	STYLE	PALATE	FLAVOUR DEPTH	FLAVOURS		
	purple	light		simple		moderate		liquorice	earthy
	ruby	medium	moderately complex	good	plum	spicy			
	brick red	deep	complex	outstanding	blackcurrant	prune			
	red-brown	opaque			coffee	gamey			
			INTENSITY	BALANCE	raspberry	raisin			
			low/moderate	out of balance	black pepper	chocolate			
			high	balanced	toasty	nutty			

COMMENTS



TATACHILLA KEYSTONE  
McLAREN VALE GRENACHE SHIRAZ

APPEARANCE	COLOUR	DEPTH	BOUQUET	STYLE	PALATE	FLAVOUR DEPTH	FLAVOURS		
	purple	light		simple		moderate		liquorice	earthy
	ruby	medium	moderately complex	good	plum	spicy			
	brick red	deep	complex	outstanding	blackcurrant	prune			
	red-brown	opaque			coffee	gamey			
			INTENSITY	BALANCE	raspberry	raisin			
			low/moderate	out of balance	black pepper	chocolate			
			high	balanced	toasty	nutty			

COMMENTS



ST HALLETT FAITH  
BAROSSA SHIRAZ

APPEARANCE	COLOUR	DEPTH	BOUQUET	STYLE	PALATE	FLAVOUR DEPTH	FLAVOURS		
	purple	light		simple		moderate		liquorice	earthy
	ruby	medium	moderately complex	good	plum	spicy			
	brick red	deep	complex	outstanding	blackcurrant	prune			
	red-brown	opaque			coffee	gamey			
			INTENSITY	BALANCE	raspberry	raisin			
			low/moderate	out of balance	black pepper	chocolate			
			high	balanced	toasty	nutty			

COMMENTS

