



ROCKBURN
CENTRAL OTAGO

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GOLD MEDAL FOR ROCKBURN 2002 PINOT NOIR

Rockburn Pinot Noir 2002 has won a Gold Medal at the New Zealand Wine Society Royal New Zealand Show.

Made by winemaker Rudi Bauer at Cromwell, and distributed by Glengarry Hancock, the medal is the latest award for Rockburn's pinot noirs, which first won gold in 1998 under the company's previous Hay's Lake label. The first vintage won a Gold Medal at the Air New Zealand Wine Awards in 1998 and the 1999 vintage won a Gold Medal at the Royal Easter Show.

Rockburn managing director, Dick Bunton, said that the 2002 vintage had been an exceptional one for Central Otago and he believed that the 2002 Pinot Noir would continue to improve in the bottle "for some time to come."

The 2002 vintage was first identified as a potential gold medal winner by Andrew Callard, MW, when he scored it 94/100 at a barrel tasting prior to its bottling in May 2003.

Mr Bunton said that the award was vindication for the company's philosophy that the "great wine is grown in the vineyard." It was also a reward for the heavy investment the company had made in developing its vineyards in the Gibbston Valley and at Lowburn, in the Cromwell Basin.

Said Mr Bunton: “The (2002 Pinot Noir) wine is a blend of grapes from the two regions and shows the strength of each region. It has lovely spices and berries on the nose from Gibbston with powerful fruit and a long finish (from Lowburn grapes).”

Mr Bunton said that he agreed with Bob Campbell MW, the chairman of judges for the 2004 NZ Wine Society Royal Easter Wine Show, who said that New Zealand red wine had never been in better heart “thanks to a favourable vintage in 2002.”

Rockburn was established as Hay’s Lake vineyard in 1991 by Dick Bunton, on a three hectare hobby block on the shores of Lake Hayes.

Over the past decade the company has expanded its vineyards to include eight hectares on the Gibbston Back Road site, and 33 hectares at their Lowburn Vineyard, one of the largest vineyards in Central Otago.

In November, 2002 the winery changed its name to Rockburn Wines. The company was expanding its export markets and wanted a name to symbolise its Central Otago location.

Rockburn Wines are exported to the United Kingdom and the United States and while 70% of the company’s plantings are in pinot noir, the winery also has a full portfolio of white varieties, which have also been the recipient of major accolades.

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