

# ATA RANGI · MARTINBOROUGH ·

## Tipuranga Teitei o Aotearoa – Ata Rangi Pinot Noir “Grand Cru”

A new honour has been bestowed upon two of New Zealand’s best known wine estates during the international Pinot Noir 2010 event held recently in Wellington. Ata Rangi in Martinborough and Felton Road in Central Otago were each given the title of “Tipuranga Teitei o Aotearoa” which translates from Maori as “Great Growth of New Zealand” or “Grand Cru”.



In presenting this inaugural award at the grand finale Gala Dinner attended by 700 guests, Alastair Maling, MW and Chairman of Pinot Noir 2010, said:

“The Tipuranga Teitei o Aotearoa award recognises those who have taken time and shown skill and commitment in evolving and developing New Zealand Pinot Noir. They are widely considered a Premier Producer of Pinot Noir; the top echelon and an inspiration to the rest of the industry. This award is a uniquely New Zealand one, combining terroir with winemaking philosophy and consistent quality. It can only be achieved with vine age, proven wine quality, authenticity and undoubted global recognition.”

Both recipients, arguably producers of New Zealand's most highly regarded Pinot Noirs, were taken aback by the surprise announcement, but clearly honoured and humbled. They attributed their success to their "unique pieces of dirt" or terroir, to their winemaking philosophies and to their hard-working and dedicated family teams.

“Knocked for six, but very happy” was the reaction of Ata Rangi founder Clive Paton. “It is extraordinary to reflect back and consider how far we’ve come in 30 years, yet be aware that this is really only the start of the journey.”

Clive’s wife Phyll acknowledged the strength of the Ata Rangi team, paying special tribute to Clive’s sister, Alison Paton and to talented winemaker Helen Masters. “To have leading industry colleagues recognise our achievements to date with this prestigious award is amazing. We started in 1980 with a clear goal, but not a lot else to be honest. Most people thought Clive was quite mad to give up his profitable dairy cows for a small, scruffy paddock and a handful of grape cuttings.”

Nigel Greening from Felton Road commented “To me it is a sign that wine in New Zealand is entering a new phase of its still short history, becoming a statement of place, message and consistency - perhaps a more mature measure than point scores, medals or competitions.”

The award bears the seal of Pinot Noir grapes with the words Tipuranga Teitei o Aotearoa and the signatures of Alastair Maling MW, Steve Smith MW and Richard Riddiford, the three chairmen to date of the Pinot Noir New Zealand events which are held every three years.