

INTERNATIONAL COOL CLIMATE WINE SHOW '09 - CLASS COMMENTS BY PANEL CHAIRS

Class 1: Sparkling Vintage: A strong class, 16 medals, however disappointingly no golds awarded. Perhaps reflecting a lack of overall intensity of fruit and complexity.

Class 2: Sparkling NV - Class too small for comment

Class 3: Sauvignon Blanc '08 – Comments by panel chairs:

1. Lack varietal character in many wines "neutral dry whites". Some faults, volatile acidity, and oxidation on one wine. Lack concentration in some. Overall the medal winners were standouts. Definite NZ, Aust style very diverse.
2. Surprisingly good and diverse.
3. Many whites too acidic for fruit weight. Pungent aromas are no substitute for fruit concentration and intensity.
4. 10 medals from 18 wines, 1 gold few highlights.

Class 4: Chardonnay '08

1. As a class, reasonable. Green wines have not been awarded. Looking for varietal character but texture and elegance.
2. Disappointing class. One stand out wine. Most lacked balance. Many wines too developed for 2008.

Class 5: Pinot Gris '08

1. Too many "identi-kit" wines, appearing to be made to a formula which states that sugar plus alcohol equals good pinot gris, best wines balance phenolics, sweetness and varietal character to create harmony.
2. Not a strong class. Few highlights. Sulphide and excessive residual sugar showed on many entries.

Class 6: Other Dry Whites '08

1. Good to see different Riesling styles. Low alcohol, textured dry wines. (difficult to judge with all varieties mixed in. Should have Riesling in class of own). Gewuzt in good class overall however lacks highlights. Some faults unbalance RS/VA issues. Otherwise a good line up of some good well made wines - however nothing outstanding. PS. some reductive notes in riesling - need to watch finishing under screw cap.
2. Vintage conditions appear to have reduced aromaticity. Some careless use of oak and sugar unbalances several wines.

Class 7: Pinot Noir '08

1. Overall sound wines from a winemaking sense. Most mid-weight though with a good early drinkability. Balanced styles, though these do lack richness and intensity.
2. Better balance of fruit in 2008. Some lovely complexing characters and some interesting wines to watch.
3. Several wines over extracted and wandering into dry red territory. Award winners show well handled tannins and ripe fruit while avoiding over-oaking.
4. Best wines showing bright fruit with light complexity.

Class 8: Other Dry Reds

Solid class alcohols in check not high and hot. Wines showed brightness. Perhaps too much residual sweetness.

Class 9: Sauvignon Blanc '07

Disappointing:- most over developed for 2 year old wine.

Class 10: Chardonnay '07

1. Strong class of chardonnays pleasing to see, though many wines were a little too worked with artifact dominance. 'Let the fruit do the talking'. Top wines in the class were well made balancing fruit and artifact.
2. Too many wines lacking the fruit weight to support such high levels of oak.

Class 11: Pinot Gris '07

Top wine showing complexity and balance. Winemaking artifact well handled in several entities. Sell and/or drink these wines now.

Class 12: Other Dry Whites '07

Riesling standouts - good to see other varietals and blends and Gewurtz too phenolic - winemakers should back off on extractions.

Class 13: Pinot Noir '07

1. Strongest class of the day. Excellent intensity and concentration of flavour in the top wines. Generally a strong group and no real winemaking faults. Strong style definition, elegant wines had poise and balance. The richer deeper concentrated styles were dark fruits, silky and cherry, refined wines. Good oak handling.
2. Generally good but extraction at the expense of fruit still an issue. A strong class of wines.
3. Brettanomyces appears in several otherwise good wines. Top awards of contrasting styles, both strongly supported.

Class 14: Merlot Cabernet and blends '07

1. Strong class of well made wines. Fresh style wines with good acidity. Varietal expressive. Well balanced group of wines. Gold strongest in class.
2. Difficult to achieve palate intensity and ripeness in the cool areas.

Class 15: Shiraz '07

1. Very good. Focus on vibrancy. Fresh fruit. Avoiding green character.
2. Solid class best wines showed subtle tannins, bright fruit and length.

Class 16: Other Dry Reds - Class too small for comment.

Class 17: Pinot Noir 2006

A strong class, 16 medals, however disappointingly no golds awarded. Perhaps reflecting a lack of overall intensity of fruit and complexity.

Class 18: Sauvignon Blanc '06 and older – no entries

Class 19: Chardonnay '06 and older

Strong class with both golds being outstanding examples of power, elegance and complexity. Only criticism of the class - oak handling a little heavy on occasions, some dilute wines and unbalanced, either too sweet or too austere.

Class 20: Pinot Gris '06 and older - Class too small for comment.

Class 21: Other Dry Whites '06 and older

Rieslings stunning. Aged Gewurzt characters different. Aged Gewurztraminers need more exposure as a genre.

Class 22: Pinot Noir '05 and older

Too forward developed wines for age. Not faulty wines just more forward in flavour/colour than would be expected. The silver medal was the best wine of the flight as it still had some freshness, line and elegance.

Class 23: Merlot Cabernet and blends '06 and older

Wines looked well developed. Best wines showing brightness, ripeness and fresh fruit.

Class 24: Shiraz '06 and older

Top wine definite stand out wine of bracket. Other wines lacked intensity/richness. Oak a little poorly handled dominating fruit. Some microbial issues - this needs to be sorted.

Class 25: Other Dry Reds '06 and older – no class comment available