

NEW ZEALAND

LISTENER

MAY 1-7 2010

Web watching with Deborah Hill Cone



War of the words
CK Stead's latest literary spat



Bright new star
Margaret Mahy's magical family TV drama



Dear Mum
David Hill's Mother's Day tribute



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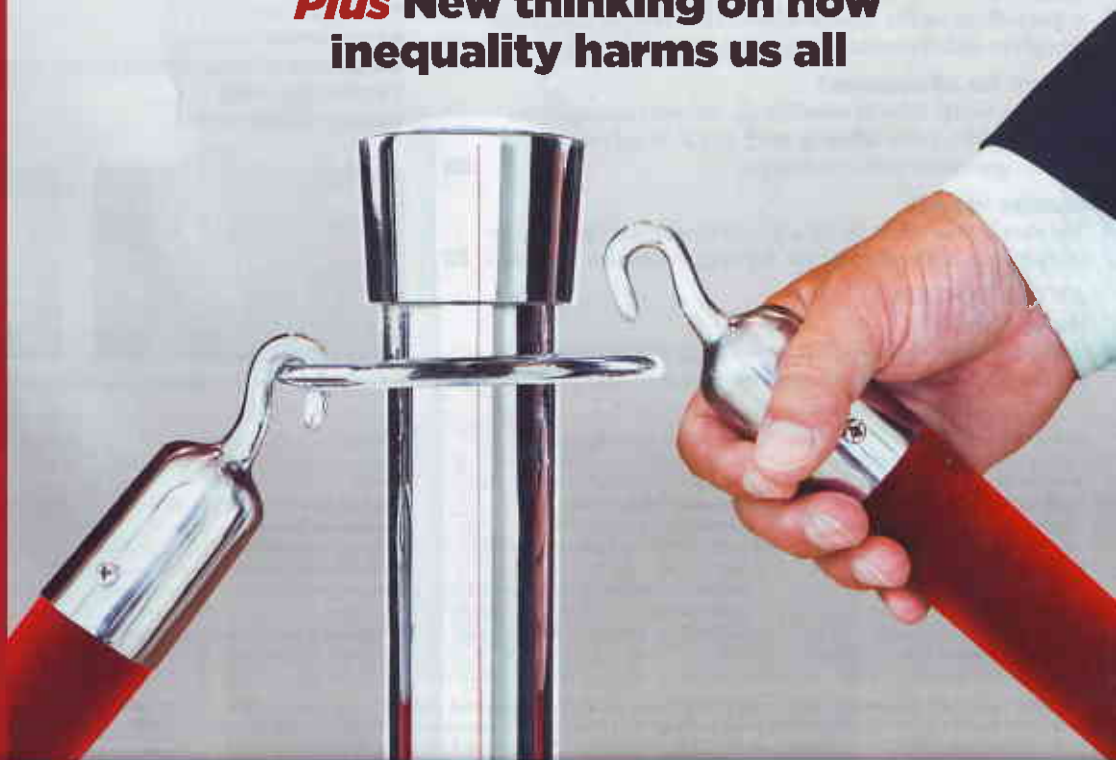
\$3.90 inc GST

POLL SURPRISE

Is equality still important?

What New Zealanders really think about tax, pay & egalitarianism

Plus New thinking on how inequality harms us all



WIN - the books behind TVNZ's *The Pacific*



Wine

BY MICHAEL COOPER

Red all over

There's more to Marlborough than sauvignon blanc.



Which part of the country most often scoops the pinot noir trophy at the industry-run Air New Zealand Wine Awards? Central Otago? Martinborough?

It's Marlborough. In the past decade, the Marlborough region's reds have triumphed six times, well ahead of Central Otago's three successes and Martinborough's one. Villa Maria Reserve Marlborough Pinot Noir (\$50) has won the prized trophy on three occasions.

Marlborough, with more than 40% of New Zealand's total pinot noir plantings, has more area devoted to the great red grape of Burgundy than Otago and the Wairarapa combined. Among the region's most acclaimed pinot noirs are Cloudy Bay, Dog Point, Fromm, Hans Herzog, Montana "T" Terraces Estate, Seresin, Terravin, Villa Maria and Wither Hills.

So, why is Marlborough not better known for its pinot noirs? Think Marlborough, think sauvignon blanc. Once a region acquires a stellar reputation for a particular grape variety, it can struggle to win recognition for its other successful wine styles.

Marlborough has also produced many of New Zealand's least exciting pinot noirs – fresh and raspberryish, but simple. At first, most of the grapes were grown on the floor of the Wairau Valley, on fertile, alluvial sites better suited to sauvignon blanc. A recent shift to elevated, north-facing slopes on the valley's south side, with relatively heavy, clay-based soils, is yielding a far superior breed of pinot noir, enticingly scented, velvety and rich.

\$20 or less

Torea Marlborough Pinot Noir 2008 ★★☆☆

Delicious young, this single-vineyard Brancott Valley red is floral and full-bodied with a hint of herbs and very good depth of well-rounded plum and spice flavours. Fine value. \$20

Lobster Reef Marlborough Pinot Noir 2009 ★★☆☆
Smooth-flowing, medium-bodied style

with ripe cherry/plum flavour and some savoury, spicy complexity. \$18.99

Wild South Marlborough Pinot Noir 2009 ★★☆☆

Sturdy, youthful red with good body and plenty of berryish, slightly herbal flavour, ripe and smooth. \$18.99

\$20-\$25

Secret Stone Marlborough Pinot Noir 2009 ★★☆☆

Instantly appealing, this is a ruby-hued, full-bodied red with plenty of ripe cherry/plum flavour, showing some oak-derived complexity, and a smooth finish. \$21.95

Wairau River Marlborough Pinot Noir 2008 ★★☆☆

This delicious drink-young style is fragrant, sweet-fruited and supple, with a Beaujolais-like fruitiness and charm. \$23

West Brook Marlborough Pinot Noir 2008 ★★☆☆

Softly seductive, with moderately rich cherry and spice flavours, gently seasoned with nutty oak. It's drinking well now. \$22

\$25-\$30

Astrolabe Voyage Marlborough Pinot Noir 2008 ★★☆☆

Generous, full-coloured red with concentrated, cherryish, spicy flavours, youthful tannins and good complexity. Drink now or cellar. \$29

Framingham Marlborough Pinot Noir 2008 ★★☆☆

A "feminine" style – meaning elegant rather than powerful – with ripe cherryish flavours, a subtle twist of oak and gentle tannins. Stylish, finely balanced wine, supple and scented. \$28

\$30-\$40

Jackson Vintage Widow Marlborough Pinot Noir 2008 ★★☆☆

Deeply coloured, beautifully rich and supple, with notably ripe sweet-fruit

flavours and loads of drink-young appeal. \$40

Main Divide Tipinui Reserve Marlborough Pinot Noir 2008 ★★☆☆

Sturdy, fleshy Brancott Valley red, full-coloured and fragrant, with concentrated ripe flavours, showing excellent complexity and depth. It's still developing, but already delicious. \$33

Seresin Leah Marlborough Pinot Noir 2008 ★★☆☆

From three company-owned sites, and bottled unfiltered and unfiltered, this sturdy red is full of personality. Savoury and warm, it is deep, plummy and nutty, with unusual complexity. \$37.

Over \$40

Dog Point Vineyard Marlborough Pinot Noir 2008 ★★☆☆

This powerful, deeply coloured red shows lovely density and roundness. Generous, ripe and complex, with layers of flavour, it is a classy, finely balanced wine that's already hard to resist. \$41.75

Fromm Clayvin Vineyard Marlborough Pinot Noir 2007 ★★☆☆

Authoritative but very approachable, this is a strikingly fragrant, concentrated and supple red. Deep and youthful in colour, with great depth of plummy, spicy flavour, complex and savoury, it should blossom with cellaring. \$61

Wine of the week

Montana Living Land Series Marlborough Pinot Noir 2009 (★★☆☆)

From grapes certified as in transition to organic, this fragrant, full-bodied red offers fresh, ripe plum/spice flavours, gentle tannins and more savoury complexity than you'd expect at this price. \$19.95

