

Landmark Chardonnay prices inch down

20 May 2002 by JR

You may remember my news story a few weeks back about what seemed to me the iniquitous price rises for Landmark of Sonoma's current Overlook and Damaris Chardonnays with the introduction of a new British importer. Oddbins had been retailing them at £16.99 and £19.99 respectively. New agents Laytons (part of the Jeroboams group which has seven wine shops around London and Cirencester, of which three also sell cheese and other foods) were proposing to sell them for £25.45 and £35.95 respectively - price rises which seemed shocking to me, especially since there had clearly been no major price increase from the winery, as owner Mary Colhoun confirmed.

I received a letter today, May 21, from Jeroboams complaining that 'visitors to this section of your site who see the Landmark item may take away a slightly inaccurate, and perhaps unfair, view of our company and how we conduct our business'. The letter went on to explain that a press release would be sent out shortly explaining the 'repositioning of the current pricing'. Jeroboams have now been shamed into reducing their prices to £19.95 and £33.95 respectively. So that's a much more bearable increase of 17 per cent on the price of the blended Overlook bottling, but still an increase of 80 per cent on the (admittedly much superior) Damaris bottling.

The letter goes on: 'We can assure both you and our customers that our margins comfortably reflect those currently in operation throughout the industry. We are not being greedy!'

I'd say the key word here is 'comfortably'.