NZ - Wellington for winos

1 Feb 2010 by Jancis Robinson

Pinot Noir New Zealand 2010 has already begun today in Wellington and continues for the rest of the week. The nation's seaside capital city is currently host to a wide range of wine-loving foreigners, including my compatriots Oz Clarke, Tim Atkin, Jamie Goode and Neal Martin from the UK and James Halliday and Brian Croser from Australia. The event is so important to New Zealand that the premier, John Key (see this video), even went on the David Letterman show in the US (sort of) promising to pick American visitors up at the airport himself (see clip).

Wellington resident Kent Lewis has offered visiting sybarites the following local tips:

- Wellington has lovely cafés. Best coffee (my opinion) is at Astoria right on Lambton Quay, but Nikau (City Gallery), L'Affare (near Moore Wilson), and Floridita's (Cuba St) all do a great job as well.

- A great café for lunch is Nikau (City Gallery), which is walking distance from the Pinot Noir events.

- Good evening meals abound: Martin Bosley's (Oriental Parade and pictured here), Logan Brown (Cuba St), Ambeli (Marjoribanks St), Matterhorn (Cuba St) are all good options. Matterhorn may be the best for seasonal NZ produce and an interesting wine list.

- For retail wine shops, you should try Moore Wilson's on Tory St (they have a wine department, in addition to a fresh food grocer and dry goods department). They seem to undersell virtually every NZ producer on their own wines - a strange phenomenon, but very welcome for those of us who live in Wellington.

To follow events at and around this Pinot Noir event, see Jamie Goode's blog.