Austrian Pinot Noir best in the world?

16 Aug 2010 by Jancis Robinson

The Austrians are at it again. They have held several significant blind comparisons of their own top wines with similar wines from elsewhere and 'won' every time. See, for example, Grüner Veltliner - distinctly groovy grape, my account of a comparison between their Grüner Veltliners and some top Chardonnays from around the world with several fastidious tasters in London, way back in 2002; World Dry Riesling Championship in 2004 won by Guess Who?; and Austria

triumphs again - with Sauvignon Blanc.

Earlier this month they pulled off the same trick with their Pinot Noirs - in Singapore, with the resident MW Lisa Perrotti

Brown and one of the world's best-known wine collectors N K Yong on the tasting panel. I wonder if they will try to stage

the same sort of taste-off somewhere even better known for its love of burgundy than Singapore? Beaune perhaps…

A total of 34 famous Pinots made between 2001 and 2008 were served and the tasters were asked to vote for their favourites, with one point for their top wine, two for their second right down to 34 points for their least favourite wine. The wine with the fewest points was reckoned the most admired wine and this was how the top 20 wines out of the 34 performed (with the top four shown above - sorry, Felton Road, I had to chop your bottle on the right off to fit our funny square shape):

1 Wieninger, Pinot Noir Grand Select 2004 Wien (Vienna), Austria 65
2 Comte Georges de Vogüé, Chambolle-Musigny Premier Cru 2005 Burgundy 168
3 JR Reinisch, Pinot Noir Holzspur Grand Reserve 2007 Thermenregion, Austria 175
4 Markowitsch, Pinot Noir Reserve 2004 Carnuntum, Austria 178
5 Felton Road, Pinot Noir Block 5 2006 New Zealand 185
6 Schloss Halbturn, Pinot Noir 2004 Burgenland, Austria 195
7 Schneider, Pinot Noir Reserve 2004 Thermenregion, Austria 203
8 DRC, Vosne-Romanée, Cuvée Duvault-Blochet Premier Cru 2006 Burgundy 204
9 Paul Achs, Pinot Noir 2004 Burgenland, Austria 205
10 Georges Roumier, Chambolle-Musigny Les Cras Premier Cru 2006 Burgundy 213
11 Claus Preisinger, Pinot Noir 2004 Burgenland, Austria 214

12 Auer, Pinot Noir Reserve 2002 Thermenregion, Austria 228
13 JR Reinisch, Pinot Noir Holzspur Grand Reserve 2004 Thermenregion, Austria 229
14 Markowitsch, Pinot Noir Reserve 2006 Carnuntum, Austria 233
15 Auer, Pinot Noir Reserve 2007 Thermenregion, Austria 238
16 Méo-Camuzet, Clos de Vougeot Grand Cru 2006 Burgundy 245
17 Auguste Lignier, Clos de la Roche Grand Cru 2004 Burgundy 247
18 DRC, Échezeaux Grand Cru 2001 Burgundy 251
19 Juris, Pinot Noir Hochreit 2004 Burgenland, Austria 254
20 Domaine Serene, Pinot Noir Jerusalem Hill 2006 Oregon, USA 264

These were the tasters at Fifty Three Restaurant, Singapore on 4 August:

Timothy Goh Sommelier, Les Amis Group
Lisa Perrotti-Brown MW Press & consultant, erobertparker.com
Jenny Tan *Straits Times* etc
Henry Hariyono Importer, Artisan Cellars
Fazil Sommelier, Esmirada Group
NK Yong Collector and writer, *Business Times*
Adeline Yeo *Cuisine & Wine*
Wei Jun Kuek *Cuisine & Wine*
Kenny Leong *Appetite*
Hwee Peng Lim Consultant, writer & educator
Ying Hsien Consultant, MW student
Julien Drevon Sommelier, Marina Bay Sands
Derrick Lim Sommelier & restaurant group consultant
Robert Rees Importer, Wine Exchange Asia
Chee Wee Lee Importer, Vinocave
Curtis Marsh The Wandering Palate/Reuters