

NELSON'S
**FIRST
XV**
WINE COMPETITION



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First XV Wine Competition – and the winners are...

New Zealand – represented by Nelson wines, has held international competition at arm's length to win the supreme award and First XV trophy at the 2011 Nelson Wineart First XV Wine Competition.

The winners were chosen after a blind tasting of all 45 wines – Riesling, Pinot Gris and Gewürztraminer. The judges then selected their favourite 15 wines (the first XV) from all the wines and the country with the most wines in this selection was awarded the overall trophy.

New Zealand took the award after having 7 of the 15 wines in the judges' favourite first XV line-up, Italy had 6 and the USA 2. The best Riesling was judged **Blackenbrook Vineyard Nelson 2009**, the best Pinot Gris was **Etude Carneros 2010** from the USA and the best Gewürztraminer was **Cantina Tramin Alto Adige Nussbaumer 2009 from Italy**.

Matching what was happening on the rugby field, Italy, USA and New Zealand had each provided a 'team' of 15 consisting of five wines from each of three aromatic wine varieties - Gewürztraminer, Pinot Gris and Riesling. The New Zealand selection was represented by Nelson wines, renowned for their aromatics.

The independent judging team included renowned international wine judges Sam Kim from New Zealand, Leslie Sbrocco from USA, Riccardo Castaldi from Italy and Ralph Kyte-Powell from Australia was the chair.

Ralph Kyte-Powell says it was a fantastic international event and he says the results from the blind tasting couldn't have been more perfect.

"We achieved results that were really quite remarkable. If it had been organised, it couldn't have turned out any better because we had one winner from each of the three countries participating and we also

had an overall winner which was the host. It was all completely anonymous and I didn't even know the results until I opened the envelope to read them out at the degustation dinner, so it added a real spice and some good natured ribbing to the event."

Ralph Kyte-Powell says the First XV competition has been a huge success.

"Nelson is one of those regions of New Zealand that slips under the radar internationally sometimes. They just do what they do really well. I think this competition focussed on Nelson in a way that rarely happens, which has got to be good."

He says he could see this becoming a regular event.

"Wine is a tool for hospitality and friendship and this Nelson Wine art competition was the perfect mix of fun and serious wine competition," says Ralph Kyte-Powell.

Daniel Schwarzenbach from Blackenbrook Vineyard, who won the best Riesling, says it was a fantastic international event that has put Nelson on the map.

"It was a real honour for us to win Best Riesling against such great competition and it's an honour too for Nelson and New Zealand.

"Riesling is like the white pinot noir for winemakers, it's quite a challenging wine and to win against stiff competition is fantastic. With 4 out of 5 of the Riesling winners coming from Nelson that's all really good for our region."

"It was a fabulous event, I'd like to thank Nelson wineart – it was so well organised and professional."

A total of 360 bottles were flown into Nelson recently - 180 from Italy and 180 from America for the judging, the Degustation Dinner held straight after the judging, and the Tutored Tasting today.

Nelson Winegrowers Association Chairman Mike Brown says the competition has been a huge success.

"As well as promoting the quality of Nelson wines on a global level, this competition has shown that while we're serious about making great wine, we also like to have a bit of fun. Linking wine with rugby shows just how far New Zealand has come over the past decades from a rugby and beer only mentality. I know a lot of fans who want to enjoy the rugby with a great glass of local wine."

For those who want to sample some more great Nelson wine, the Nelson New Release Wine Tasting will be held at the Boathouse on Wednesday 28 September from 5 – 7.30pm, where guests can taste over 100 local wines and chat to the people who made them.

To find out more go to : www.nelsonwineart.co.nz



Photo Caption: Chair of Nelson Winegrowers Mike Brown of Waimea Estate accepts the overall winner's trophy on behalf of Nelson region from Ralph Kyte-Powell, Australian wine writer and chair of the judging panel.

For More Information Please Contact:

Nelson Wine Art - Gisela Purcell on 021 1010 366

Tasting notes are also available – please email admin@nelsonwineart.co.nz for copies.

The 2011 Nelson Wineart First Fifteen

Trophy wines are in italics

The top 5 Riesling are:

- | | | |
|---|---|----------------------|
| 1 | <i>Blackenbrook Vineyard Nelson 2009</i> | <i>Nelson</i> |
| 2 | Greenhough Vineyard Apple Valley 2010 | Nelson |
| 3 | Woollaston Estates Nelson 2009 | Nelson |
| 4 | Neudorf Vineyards Moutere 2010 | Nelson |
| 5 | Cantina Produttori Valle Isarco Aristos 2010 | Italy |

The top 5 Pinot Gris are:

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------------|
| 1 | <i>Etude Carneros 2010</i> | <i>USA</i> |
| 2 | Te Mania Nelson 2010 | Nelson |
| 3 | Plözner Friuli Grave 2010 | Italy |
| 4 | Neudorf Vineyards Moutere 2010 | Nelson |
| 5 | Chehalem Reserve Willamette Valley 2008 | USA |

The top 5 Gewürztraminer are:

1	<i>Cantina Tramin Alto Adige Nussbaumer 2009</i>	<i>Italy</i>
2	J. Hofstätter Kolbenhof Alto Adige 2010	Italy
3	St Michael-Eppan Alto-Adige Sanct Valentin 2010	Italy
4	Cantina Produttori Cortaccia Alto Adige Brenntal 2009	Italy
5	Seifried Estate Winemaker's Collection Nelson 2010	Nelson

The final tallies for Italy, the US and Nelson are therefore:

USA	2
Italy	6
Nelson	7

Therefore the winner of the 2011 Nelson Wineart First Fifteen Wine Competition is Nelson, New Zealand