

Global Pinot Noirs

Who says **Pinot Noir** doesn't like to travel far from its Burgundian homeland? Southern France, Argentina, New Zealand, the cooler bits of Australia and even Chile are all producing sublime examples of the world's most mercurial red grape. This brilliant line-up includes wines from the Godfather of Argentinian Pinot, Alamos's Nicolas Catena, a Western Australian wine produced by Jeff Burch from the iconic Howard Park winery and even a top notch Italian wine from biodynamic winemaker Alois Lageder. If you can't find something to tickle your tastebuds here, you just can't call yourself a true Pinot-phile.

Laroche Pinot Noir, Southern France

£7.67 + Vat

Juicy, medium-bodied Pinot Noir with plenty of red cherry, strawberry and mulberry fruit reflecting the warmer South of France climate. The tannins framing the fruit are sweet and ripe with a delicious herby, savoury edge to the finish. Soft, fruity and delicious.

Punto Nino Alto Pinot Noir, Chile

£13.16 + Vat

Mid ruby red, with orange rim. Moderate intensity of colour. Intense and complex, with mulberry and clove and date aromas. Soft but mouth filling, complex and warm with red fruit and forest flavours.

Alamos Pinot Noir, Argentina

£7.00 + Vat

Nicolas Catena was the third generation of his family to make wine in Mendoza but the first to see the potential in planting higher and higher vineyards in search of cool climate sites ideal for the production of fine wine. Today, over a decade on from the first Catena Malbec in 1994, he works with his daughter Laura (who improbably juggles her work as an ER surgeon in San Francisco with the family business) in their relentless pursuit of the finest possible quality wines from their unique vineyard sites.

Mad Fish Pinot Noir, Western Australia

£8.45 + Vat

The winery takes its name from Madfish Bay which can be found near Denmark in Western Australia's Great Southern and where, apparently, fish go loco. Designed to reflect WA's laid-back lifestyle, both the packaging and the juice are right on the money. As you'd expect from wines from the same stable as the mighty Howard Park they are classically cool-climate in style with a real vibrancy of fruit and an abundance of cheeky charm.

Spy Valley Pinot Noir, New Zealand

£10.97 + Vat

Named after the satellite listening post located over the road from the winery, Spy Valley is in the Waihopai Valley in Marlborough. Happily for us they appear more interested in fine wine than exploding cigars, and recent vintages have seen the winery's trophy cabinet filled to bursting. Gorgeous, dark red fruit aromas, a chocolatey note on the palate and a sumptuous, smooth finish.

Krafuss Pinot Nero, Alois Lageder, Italy

£21.17 + Vat

Alois Lageder is one of Italy's foremost winemakers. Based in the mountainous Alto Adige region in the far north of the country, the vines (which were converted to biodynamics in 2004) enjoy a long, sunny growing season with warm days and cool nights that help to preserve both the grapes' natural aromas and acidity. The wines themselves are made in a solar-powered state-of-the-art winery (which will be carbon neutral by the end of 2007). The house style is all about freshness, elegance and purity of fruit. These are finely chiseled wines with real definition, but immense charm too.

A wonderful expression of a mercurial grape; light and elegant with cherry, strawberry and cinnamon spice all carried downstream by crisp tannins and fresh acidity.