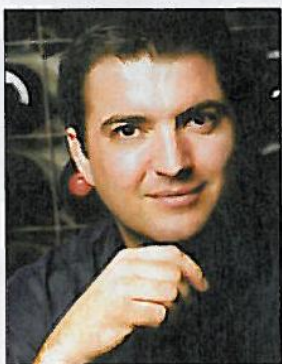


Wine of the week: a thrilling Kiwi pinot



by **Matthew Jukes**

2010 Ballochdale, Pinot Noir, Awatere Valley, Marlborough, New Zealand (£17.50, Amps Fine Wines, 01832-273502, www.ampsfinewines.co.uk).

Set up ten years ago to grow premium grapes in the beautiful, cool, Awatere Valley, Ballochdale Estate supplies luminaries such as Jules Taylor, Villa Maria, Astrolabe and Nobilo's Icon label with pinot noir. In 2010 this

estate decided to release its own wine made by Emmanuel Bolliger. I am keen on Marlborough pinot, with its vibrant red tones and crunchy minerality. All too often Martinborough and Central Otago grab the Kiwi pinot headlines, but I am equally excited about Waipara and also Marlborough. These wines have tone and urgency about them which makes them

thrilling on the palate and lifted on the nose. There is another reason to jump at the chance to buy this inaugural Ballochdale vintage – it is remarkably good value for money. Most top Kiwi pinot slumbers on the wrong side of the £20 barrier. This one, with its haunting, summer pudding aroma and sleek, red-cherry palate is a dead cert at £17.50, so congrats to Philip Amps for sniffing it out. This is another good example, on this page, of the highly skilled independent merchant setting the tone for us avid wine drinkers.

● *Matthew Jukes is a winner of the International Wine & Spirit Competition's Communicator of the Year (www.matthewjukes.com).*

