

**Press Release**  
**November 4, 2009**

## **Marlborough Wine Weekend Cements Reputation of Region**

- **More than 300 people attend 2<sup>nd</sup> Marlborough Wine Weekend**
- **Ross Lawson's contribution to Wine Industry is recognised**
- **New Scholarship announced**

More than 300 people, many from overseas gave the 2<sup>nd</sup> biannual Marlborough Wine Weekend the thumbs up.

The three day event provided winemakers, buyers, growers, distributors and wine aficionados with the opportunity to learn more about the range of wine styles Marlborough is producing.

Events ranged from sub regional tours, to a Grand Tasting where Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Noir were pitted against the rest of the world, through to a gourmet dinner presented by award winning chef Al Brown.

While the aim of the weekend was to highlight the diversity of Marlborough wines, it also provided the industry a chance to showcase its premium quality in a variety of prestigious settings.

Guests got to experience the beauty of the region and its unique vineyard settings, along with a rare opportunity to wander around the manicured grounds of historic Timara Lodge, the venue for a number of the weekend events.

While many of those attending had some industry involvement, there were also a number of tour parties from Australia and New Zealand. As the accolades flowed, almost as freely as the wine, the majority of those attending were quick to say they would be back for the next Marlborough Wine Weekend, planned for 2011.

During the weekend, Wine Marlborough Chairman Blair Gibbs announced the formation of a new scholarship, linking Marlborough with the UK. With the help of Britain's John Avery MW and the NZ-UK Link Foundation, the scholarship intends to provide resources for a young Marlborough industry person to spend time in the UK, and the next year will fund a UK recipient to travel to New Zealand.

The industry also honoured one of its own at the weekend, with the Wine Marlborough Lifetime Achievement Award, awarded to the late Ross Lawson. Mr Lawson from Lawson's Dry Hills played a vital role in the early days of Marlborough's wine industry and went on to found and chair the Screwcap Initiative. He died earlier this year. His award was accepted by his daughter Romani, to a standing ovation.

As the Marlborough wine industry winds down after the long weekend, it will not have much time to take a breath as organisers work towards the annual Marlborough Wine Festival. The largest and longest running festival of its kind will take place at Brancott Estate on February 13, next year.

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