



**Felton Road is the
Real Review Winery of
the Year New Zealand
for 2024.**



Last year Felton Road was third, in 2022 fifth, in 2021 third, in 2020 fourth, in 2019 third, and in 2018 sixth. In seven years, its lowest ranking was sixth. I cannot think of a more deserving winery occupying the top slot. Well done, proprietor Nigel Greening and chief winemaker Blair Walter.

Today is the launch of The Real Review Top Wineries of New Zealand which lists nearly 160 top performing wineries.

Felton Road is jointly-owned by Greening—who divides his time between London and Bannockburn—and Blair Walter, Felton Road’s winemaker since their first vintage in 1997.

I recall some years ago Greening explaining that growth, is by its own definition, unachievable. I asked him if he still believed that to be true. He replied:

“We made 400 barrels of wine in 2006 and we haven’t exceeded that figure since. We have also kept our prices in line with inflation.

“Blair and I regard this business as a lifetime project. We take a long-term view. Felton Road is there for the next generation.”

The winery is best known for its pinot noir, with Block 5 and Block 3 occupying pole positions. If I was forced to choose I would give robust, beautiful Block 5 first place but the sometimes hauntingly beautiful Block 3 makes it a hard choice.

Three vibrant chardonnays compete for line honours with Block 6 earning the popular vote when I offered blind samples to students at a wine class.

Felton Road has three rieslings: Dry Riesling, a sweeter Bannockburn Riesling, and equally sweet Block 1 Riesling, with winning depth of flavour. All are relative bargains when you compare them to the pinot noir prices.

The Real Review’s algorithm deliberately looks at two years of tasting results. So that if a winery has a less-fortunate year due to a natural event this will not necessarily result in them missing out. All wines are tasted blind, scored out of 100, and each winery’s best wines are used to come up with our Top Wineries list.

Bob Campbell, MW
6 May 2024