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Big wins for Kiwi wines at the International Wine Challenge

Three New Zealand wines won major trophies at the 34th annual [International Wine Challenge](#) in London this year.

Three Kiwi wines have scooped top prizes at the acclaimed [International Wine Challenge](#) (IWC). Wanaka's Akitu Vineyard came home with the Sustainability Trophy, part of the competition's Planet Earth Awards,. The International Sauvignon Blanc Trophy was won by The McElhinney Wine group, of Marlborough, and Hawke's Bay's Yealands Wine Group got the International Syrah Trophy.

The IWC's awards ceremony was held at Grosvenor House Hotel in London on July 10.

The winning wines were Akitu's A1 Black Label pinot noir, McElhinney's Cause and Effect Barrique Fermented sauvignon blanc, and Yealands' Crossroads Winemakers Collection syrah, respectively.

Akitu's founder Andrew Donaldson said there was "something very special" about getting global recognition as a leader in environmentally sound wine making.

"Being acknowledged on an international stage for our wine, while respecting the planet through our practises, is a truly humbling experience that fills our team with great pride," he said.

"Caring for the environment is not only essential, in my opinion, but it makes good business sense."

The vineyard also won a slew of regional trophies for its pinot noir.

"We are making wine in the southern-most winemaking region on earth, so I'm pinching myself that the world's most influential wine judges think it's good ... actually, they seem to think it is really good," said Donaldson.

IWC winners are announced after two weeks of blind taste-testing, carried out by international wine experts, at London's Oval cricket ground.

More than 15,000 wines from 55 countries entered 2018's IWC. It was the event's 34th year running.

- Stuff

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