

The Marlborough Express

NEWS

Two of our best vie for top winemaking prize

Ian Allen

Two Marlburians are competing against each other to become the first Kivi-based winemaker to win one of the industry's top prizes.

Two Rivers of Marlborough owner David Clouston and Mud House Estate winemaker Nadine Worley are in the running for the Wine Society 2011 Young Winemaker of the Year award.

They are two of 10 finalists in the competition, held annually to recognise and reward the talents of young winemakers in Australia and New Zealand. Now in its 11th year, the award is open to winemakers under the age of 35.

The 10 finalists have been whittled down from more than 60 nominees and are in contention for one of three awards: the Sommeliers' Choice, the Members' Choice and the coveted Young Winemaker.

Over the coming weeks, the top two wines from each finalist will be tasted and assessed by winemakers, show judges, industry professionals, sommeliers and Wine Society members.

Two Rivers of Marlborough owner Mr Clouston said his 2010 Altitude Pinot Noir and 2011 Convergence Sauvignon Blanc had secured his spot in the top 10.

"This is definitely the biggest achievement for me as a winemaker to date," he said.

Nothing will keep the 34-year-old from attending the gala awards ceremony in Sydney on November 18 – not even the birth of his first child. "My wife is due 10 days before the awards, but I'll still be going. It's a once in a lifetime moment and a New Zealander has never won before. What with the World Cup, it could be our year."

Ms Worley, whose Mud House 2010 South Island Pinot Gris and 2011 Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc made the grade, said the standard of wines was extremely high.

"Being a New Zealand and Australian competition, you are in a much larger pool of winemakers, which makes it even more specialised. I feel pretty privileged to be chosen, especially when you look at the other nominees from Marlborough."

Originally from Australia, Ms Worley moved to New Zealand six years ago. "Having the wines judged against not only New Zealand but Australian wines means a lot to me as an Australian working in New Zealand. On a personal level, it is nice to be recognised for the wines you produce. And, if nothing comes from it, at least I get a weekend in Sydney."

OTHER MARLBOROUGH NOMINEES

- The Darling Wines: Chris Darling
- Marisco Vineyard: Liam McElhinney
- Allan Scott: Josh Scott
- Mount Riley Wines: Matt Murphy



Final 10: Two Rivers of Marlborough owner David Clouston has made the top 10 of the Wine Society 2011 Young Winemaker of the Year award along with fellow Marlborough winemaker Nadine Worley, of Mud House Estate.
Photo: SUPPLIED



High achiever: Mud House Estate winemaker Nadine Worley, with son Edward Jackson, 1, and family dog Ben, is a finalist in the Wine Society 2011 Young