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RAISE A GLASS

With Jane Clare



I once wrote that if pinot noir grapes were teenage girls, they'd constantly be told off by their mums. I said the grapes "prefer cool, moderate conditions but aren't really dressed for it. Their skins are thin, like flimsy little cardies and at the first sign of bad weather, temper tantrums can be had".

I never thought I'd quote myself. That delicate temperament is my vibe; thin skins bring low to medium tannins.

Flavours show strawberries, raspberries and cherries, violet and pepper. Older wines may have earthy, savoury aromas including herbs, wet wood and mushroom.

Pinot noir's heartland is Burgundy, yet it is found around the world.

Here's some pinot noir wines to try:



Pinot Noir Classic, Famille Hugel 2023 (left, £14.95, The Wine Society): I love wines from Alsace and pinot noir. So here's a win-win. This wine is delicate, with so many cherry aromas it's unreal; then cranberry, violet, rose petals and lavender.

Jean Leon 3055 Pinot Noir Rosé (£15.50, Yorkshire Vintners): Here, Spanish pinot noir partners with garnacha. It's a rosé open-armed and giving, with sun-soaked summer flowers, peachy notes, citrus and cranberries.

Veramonte Organic Pinot Noir

Casablanca (right, £16.75, Ocado): This Chilean pinot is see-through ruby and as fresh as the nearby Pacific Ocean. The wine has seen a little oak; it doesn't overpower the flavours of red berries, raspberries and blackberries.



Paul Cluver Village Pinot Noir (RRP £16.99, simplywinesdirect.uk): The South African producer's vineyards in Elgin are planted at altitude, creating cooler conditions; and we know pinot noir likes that. It has also seen a little oak ageing; yet red fruit delicacy remains.



Moët & Chandon Brut Impérial (left, £49, or £45 in a buy six deal at Majestic): Chardonnay, pinot meunier and pinot noir are the traditional grapes here. Our friend makes up about 30-40% of the blend, adding structure and intensity. The wine has moreish aromas of apple crumble and brioche.

Cloudy Bay Te Wahi Pinot Noir (£70.90, amathusdrinks.com): Te Wahi translates to "the place" in Māori, and what a beautiful place. This pinot is from Central Otago on the south island of New Zealand, where mountains shelter the vines from the sea. The southerly latitude helps to preserve acidity and delicate flavours. The skins are ripened by intense UV rays. The fruit flavours edge to cherry, bramble and blackcurrant, with a delicate spice.

■ **Jane is a member of the Circle of Wine Writers. Find her on social media**