

## Central Otago woos Masters

**M**ISHA'S Vineyard has appointed internationally renowned winemaker Oliver Masters as consulting winemaker. Masters oversaw the Central Otago's trial vintage this April in preparation for the first commercial vintage in 2008.

Forging some of New Zealand's most consistently fine Pinot Noir over the past decade, Masters has carved a reputation as one of the country's leading winemakers and wine judges.

His credentials include an honours degree in biotechnology from Massey University (1989) and a post graduate diploma in viticulture and oenology (distinction) from Lincoln University (1990).

He serves as a senior wine judge at major national competitions, including the New Zealand International Wine Show, Royal Easter Show Wine Awards, and six years with the Air New Zealand Wine Awards. He is also a regular wine panelist for *Cuisine* magazine.

Masters plans to continue his involvement with Marlborough-based producer Ata Rangi as consulting oenologist. "We



Heading out into the vines at first light at Misha's Vineyard in Central Otago. photo: Tim Hawkins

are very excited that Olly will be making his Central Otago debut with our vineyard where he will have an ongoing role in setting the direction for style and taste," said Misha Wilkinson, director of Misha's Vineyard. "With Olly joining our team, which also includes Robin Dicey, arguably

one of New Zealand's most recognised viticulturalists, we have the best possible combination to be able to realise the flavours from our vineyard."

Masters said the Central Otago opportunity was one he just couldn't pass by.

## Winemaker in cyberspace

**T**HORBURY winemaker Simon Fell has taken to cyberspace. Fell, a graduate of the Tairāwhiti Polytechnic's wine science diploma who joined the Auckland-based company in 2006, has launched a blog on the winery's website.

He sees blogging as an opportunity to talk with Thornbury drinkers around the world.

"Not only is blogging a great way for me to be able to keep them up to date with what's going on here at the winery,

but it gives them the opportunity to engage with me through posting comments and asking questions," said Fell, who has worked vintages in Central Otago, Oregon, Bordeaux and Western Australia, to name but a few.

"It's also a great way to promote New Zealand's wine industry overseas.

"Thornbury has a particularly strong following in the United States and through my blog I can easily interact with our drinkers who don't get the chance to come to New Zealand and experience the

wine industry first hand."

Fell, who returned to New Zealand in 2003 and worked for Vidal Wines in Hawke's Bay before moving to Thornbury, intends to use the blog to both inform and educate those interested in wine. Being mid-way through vintage, the current focus is on what's happening in the winery, with Fell sharing his thoughts and intentions for his 2007 Chardonnay.

To check out Fell's progress, visit [www.thornbury.co.nz](http://www.thornbury.co.nz)

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