

featured flight of the month

rippon, central otago, new zealand
\$41* wine flight & \$20 cheese pairing
*price does not include Tinker's Field Pinot Noir



With its first vines planted in 1975, Rippon is one of the great pioneering estates of Central Otago. After working experimental vines for several years, Rolfe and Lois Mills began their work in earnest as winegrowers, planting the first full blocks in 1982 and producing Rippon's first commercial vintage in 1989. Their son Nick grew up in the winery and among the vines. He honed his winemaking skills in France, notably at Domaine Albert Mann in Alsace, and Domain Jean-Jacques Confuron and DRC in Burgundy.

Heading up the estate since 2002, Nick Mills has continued and elevated his parents' work at Rippon, cultivating mainly Pinot Noir and Riesling on the property's schist terroir. The vines are managed biodynamically and organically, with thought to Nick's responsibility as a fourth-generation farmer on the land, to future generations that will live and grow on the land, and, of course, to the quality of the wine that comes from such care and attention.

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2020 SAUVIGNON BLANC
\$24|\$86

From the estate's schist-based gravel soils, the Rippon Sauvignon Blanc is an entirely different beast from what we think of as the Kiwi standard. Grown from the vines planted between 1987 and 1993, the berries are whole-cluster pressed, then the juice is racked and settled on the fine lees in a combination of stainless and neutral French oak [60/40], not for the oak, but for the form of the vessel itself. Mouthfeel is gained here by high lees to wine contact and a more efficient natural lees stirring across unhurried wild ferments.

90 points, Vinous 'From the world's most southerly wine region, Central Otago, Rippon's '20 Sauvignon Blanc speaks of texture and tenderness rather than fruity flamboyance. Yes, there are subtle green notes alongside ripe mango, but there's also a suggestion of white flowers from wild fermentation. The use of barrels as well as lees contact has imbued a gentle roundness to this full-bodied, supple Sauvignon. The finish is calm and gently structured, making for a quiet conclusion.'

paired perfectly with
BELLE SAISON
NORMANDY, FRANCE

Produced in limited batches with pasture-grazed *pasteurized cows' milk* from Normandy, France. Cave-aged on wood planks for 6 months minimum, this hard cheese has a deep earthy flavor with a naturally rustic rind.

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2019 GEWÜRZTRAMINER
\$29|\$104

With maturing vines and a truly favorable year for Gewürztraminer, this wine speaks with real accuracy and pride of its place. This, along with slow, whole bunch pressings, wild ferments and extended lees contact, has resulted in a wine which is defined by remarkable grace and clarity.

Self-rooted and grown on schist gravel terroir, the Rippon Gewürztraminer vines were planted between 1986 and 2006. Crushed by foot and cold-macerated on the skins for 48 hours. The wine then ferments in stainless steel, aging for 95 days on lees. Residual sugar is generally in the 8g/L neighborhood.

94 points, James Suckling 'Stunning purity of lychee and rose-water aromas here with fresh bread, wet stones and breathtaking fragrant appeal. The palate has a smooth-honed and layered, textural feel with supple, fleshy lychee and melon, as well as pear and honeysuckle.'

paired perfectly with
BUCHE DE CHEVRE
POITOU, FRANCE

Buche de Chevre is an exquisite soft-ripened cheese made from goat's milk and produced in the Poitou-Charentes region in the Loire Valley of central France. A log-shaped chevre cheese, it is ripened for a minimum 7 days rendering the exterior a crusty and hard edible rind with a classic, bloomy mold. The white pate of Buche de Chevre reveals a complex yet typical, bold taste of French goat cheeses underlined by sweet notes of caramel. Soft and creamy with a flaky centre, the cheese instantly melts in the mouth.

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2018 PINOT NOIR, 'MATURE VINES'
\$50/\$180



On the western board of Roy's Bay, Lake Wanaka, Rippon's north-facing escarpment forms the meeting point of terminal moraines and coarse gravels, all based in schist, on which some of the region's earliest vines were planted. Rippon is a Wine issued from all of the fully developed Pinot Noir vines growing in this land.

Grown from schist-based moraine and coarse gravel, the fruit for the Mature Vines Pinot Noir comes from small, meticulously managed parcels all over the estate. Picked by hand over a period of two or more weeks, fermented on indigenous yeast in more than a dozen 2-ton steel vats, with 10-24 days on the skins. Aged for a year in mostly used barrels [75%], then racked and aged for another eight months in entirely neutral barrels.

98 points, James Suckling 'Dried strawberries, mushrooms, bark and flowers on the nose. It changes all the time! Full-bodied with intense yet refined tannins that drive the center palate to a long and almost endless finish. Great length. Drink or hold.'

paired perfectly with
BANDAGED CHEDDAR, BLEU MONT DAIRY
BLUE MOUNDS, WISCONSIN

Cheesemaker Willi Lehner of Bleu Mont Dairy has been drawing praise from big-city food writers for more than 20 years now. The son of a Swiss cheesemaker who came to the states in the early 1950s, Lehner has cheesemaking in his DNA. Today, he adds to his Swiss repertoire with original cheeses he creates using his cheesemaking expertise and the controlled environment of his straw bale-aging cave. You can find Bleu Mont Dairy - and Willi's signature bandaged cheddar - in the beautiful rolling hills near Blue Mounds, Wisconsin.

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2017 PINOT NOIR 'TINKER'S FIELD'
\$24|\$76|\$274

Tinker's Field is a special section of Rippon Vineyard that vigneron Nick Mills feels speaks with a unique accent. When the vintage conditions permits, a small portion of Pinot Noir grown on the Northern slope closer to Lake Wanaka is bottled separately to tell a richer story of the season from Rippon's point of view. This is a brilliant Pinot Noir. Architectural, structural, tense and brooding, this is one of the finest single vineyard expressions of Pinot Noir to be found anywhere on New Zealand's South Island. The 2017 vintage was extremely limited.

From a parcel of the oldest vines on the Rippon property with coarse schist gravels, this is a complex and strikingly fragrant pinot noir with aromas of blueberry, blood orange, orange peel, violet, crushed rock, moist earth, pepper and fresh-ground brown spices. The palate has a strikingly vivid and intense core of blueberry and dark-cherry flavors. So vivid, ultra pure and enigmatic, this is restrained yet powerful. The tannins shine bright on a lustrous and deep-reaching finish. Stunning.

98 points, James Suckling 'Dark chocolate, clove and cinnamon characters mesh with a thick weave of emery board tannins. The wine is all dark fruit, mocha, earthiness, and toasty wood characters, quite lavish, shades of midnight for pinot noir, very long in flavor, expressive and guttural.'



paired perfectly with

TOME DE LA COZE & MAHÓN SEMICURADO
CHARENTE-MARITIME, FRANCE & MINORCA, SPAIN

Tome de la Coze's hearty natural rind cuts a striking profile and adds fantastic earthy flavors to the paste of the cheese. Notes of mushrooms and cultured butter are pronounced up front followed by the flavor of spring vegetables like asparagus and artichoke that round out the finish. Made from *raw cow's milk*.

The Mahón Semicurado ['cured'] is made on the Mediterranean island of Minorca from *raw cow's milk* and aged for 4-6 months in salty and dry conditions, is rubbed with oil as they age to create that stone-colored rind. The result is a unique and powerful cheese: bright, flaky, salty, and with the unmistakable tang of vinegar.