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Aussies Nearly Got Our Gold

It's the award winning Kiwi wine the Aussies didn't get away with.

New Zealand producer Vavasour Wines has mounted a trans-Tasman raid to retrieve a gold medal wine after a business receivership in Australia threatened to devalue the renowned brand.

Vavasour had to buy back more than 30,000 bottles of various varietals including its gold medal-winning 2006 sauvignon blanc, judged best in the world, when its Australian distributor went under as part of the high profile Evans & Tate group receivership.

But now Kiwi consumers get the last laugh. Vavasour has shipped the wine back to New Zealand and it is now on sale online at blackmarket.co.nz. Blackmarket is a New Zealand-based internet forum where wine suppliers advertise exclusive or limited offers.

Vavasour's celebrated 2006 Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc won the coveted sauvignon blanc trophy at the International Wine and Spirit Competition in London in 2007. There are 2,937 half-cases going at an 18 per cent discount to the price of the equivalent 2007 vintage.

Vavasour's Peter Scutts says the company had to buy the wine to "protect our brand in Australia".

"The receivers would have simply dropped it into an auction house. The fact the wine is a champion just wouldn't have had any recognition in a 'fire sale' setting. It's far too good a wine to watch it being virtually given away to the Aussies," Mr Scutts says.

So Vavasour bought it back from the receiver - together with smaller amounts of Vavasour's sought after Marlborough pinot noir, pinot gris and riesling. There are also cases of Vavasour's associated brands, Redwood Pass Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2006 and Goldwater Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2006.

"This sale is a wine bargain hunter's dream," Mr Scutts says. "The Vavasour 2006 Sauvignon Blanc is otherwise unobtainable and after it won in London bottles were retailing here for \$26."

In its award citation, the IWSC judges stated the wine has "wonderful aromas, asparagus, grapefruit, cut grass and kiwi fruits. Beautifully crisp in the mouth, with citrus acidity giving a real zing, lovely ripeness of fruit and a fine lingering finish".

On Blackmarket, the wine is selling for \$17.99 a bottle but you must buy it by the half case. Other 'rescued' wines in the sale are at prices up to 40 per cent less than those recommended for 2007 vintages. They are available in 12-bottle case lots only.

Issued for Vavasour Wines Ltd by Pead PR

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