



FELTON ROAD

2019 Felton Road Pinot Noir *Block 3*

Tasting Note

An inviting and intriguing nose: florals compete with rich fruit, a hint of Arabic spices, then a whiff of smoke. The palate is typically diverse and exotic: cherry, savoury, hallmark dried herbs, and a burst of dark red flowers with a finish that just won't end. The tannins are finely detailed, layered and gradually tighten to show authority over the rich core. There is both serious density and complexity that will amply reward patience. Text book Block 3 that is potentially one of the greatest... yet.

Introduction

Beginning with meticulous site selection and vineyard design started in 1991, Felton Road's story is one of refusal to compromise. A strict 100% estate policy with fully organic and biodynamic viticulture (BioGro and Demeter certified) ensures that our fruit arrives at the winery as pure as it can be, while our entire estate comes as close to true sustainability as is possible. A commitment to hands off winemaking: gravity flow, wild yeasts, wild malo, an avoidance of fining and filtration all help preserve the wine's expression of its terroir. The result is Riesling, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir which accurately express the authenticity and complexity of our unique vineyards.

Gareth King; Viticulturist, Blair Walter; Winemaker, Nigel Greening; Proprietor.

Vineyard & Viticulture

Felton Road farms four properties totalling 32 ha in the Bannockburn sub-region of Central Otago. Block 3 is situated on a gentle north facing slope in the heart of The Elms vineyard where a deep bench of silt soil is interspersed with calcareous seams. Meticulous summer management of a single vertical shoot positioned (VSP) canopy ensures even and early fruit maturity. Shoot thinning, shoot positioning, leaf plucking, bunch thinning and harvest are all carried out by hand to ensure optimum quality fruit. Cover crops are planted between rows to assist in vine balance and to improve soil health and general biodiversity.



Vintage

A season at first remarkable for its persistent rhythm of rain events throughout spring and early summer. Approaching double our long-term average, we never saw more than two weeks without significant precipitation. These wetter seasons however, are usually very welcome, as with our normally excessively dry climate, increased natural moisture is almost always positive for vine health and fruit quality. Heat summation for the season was slightly above normal with healthy green canopies and inter-rows right through to harvest. Maturity arrived rapidly and harvesting of Pinot Noir began on March 29, with all the fruit picked within a 12 day window; except for Block 1 Riesling harvested on April 17. Yields were naturally moderated and bunches were of perfect health with small, loosely packed berries, dense skins and ripe seeds.

Vinification

The unique gravity flow winery enabled the grapes to be gently destemmed directly into open-top fermenters without pumping, retaining approximately 25% as whole clusters. Traditional fermentation with a moderately long maceration on skins has extracted good colour and tannin with considerable depth of flavour. This wine was aged for 13 months in 30% new French oak barrels from artisan Burgundian coopers. In accordance with our non-interventionalist approach to winemaking, this wine was fermented with indigenous yeast and was not fined or filtered.