



2013 Ram Paddock White

Tasting Notes

An interesting expression of this exceptional vineyard site that is hardly your typical Kiwi Sauvignon at all. Flinty oak and mineral notes lift tropical aromatics which then give way to profoundly concentrated ripe fruit characters of lychee, melon and grapefruit. The palate is bone dry and crammed full of interesting flavours from tropical to citrus to stonefruit all wrapped in lovely toasty oak and creamy lees all underpinned by saline acidity. This is a full-bodied, high extract, dry white wine so serve confidently with richer styles of cuisine like braised pork belly, veal or charcuterie. It has been made to age for at least 8 years from vintage.

Wine Analysis: Alcohol 13.5 % Acidity 7.35 g/L pH 3.25 Residual sugar 2.3 g/L Extract 28 g/L

Vineyard & Winemaking

This wine has been several decades in the making. When we planted the vineyard on a series of terraces beside the Waipara River in the late 1980's the choice to add Sauvignon blanc seemed obvious. Over the years we have kept the winemaking quite simple allowing for the terroir to speak in its own voice. After 25 years the vines are fully exploiting the complex layers of ancient river gravels and are now less dependent on supplementary irrigation or nutrition. There are a couple of pockets within these terraces whose vines are a little less vigorous, slightly less productive in terms of yield and develop a different flavour profile from the rest of the vineyard. In 2013 these areas were given slightly different pruning treatments, lighter shoot loading and monitored closely so that we could "flavour farm" to give us the small berries, thick skins, low acidity and intense flavour we were looking for. The 2013 growing season was close to ideal, albeit a little warmer than average, that gave us the perfect palette to work from.

After careful hand selection ensuring only clean ripe grapes were used the fruit was whole bunch pressed directly to a mix of old and new French oak barriques for warm fermentation. We kept the solids levels in the juice deliberately high in order to encourage the yeasts during ferment and build complexity in the finished wine. Regular lees stirring ensured that the yeast remained suspended to allow decomposition of the yeast cells which release their own natural preservative called glutathione. Which in turn meant we needed to use a minimum of Sulphur Dioxide. After 10 months "elevation" in barrel the transformation from fruit juice to wine was complete.

Harvest date: 7 April Brix 24.0 Acidity 8.2 g/L pH 3.3

Awards

International Wine & Spirit Competition 2014 - **Silver Medal**