



2015 Sauvignon Blanc

Tasting Notes

The wine is a brilliant pale straw green colour. The aromas are as immediately striking as they are appealing – Passionfruit, gooseberry, elderflower and grapefruit introduce the nose while slightly riper exotic fruits fill in the background. There is also a whiff of gun-flint from a touch of barrel fermentation and creamy yoghurt like complexity from extended lees contact both serving to knit the aromatics together. In the mouth the wine is refreshingly dry, tangy, medium to full bodied and excitingly intense. The flavours are seriously concentrated with those passionfruit, gooseberry and grapefruit characters complimented by pithy tropical fruit notes, think Pomelo or Jackfruit. Lovely saline minerality pulls the fruit through the mid-palate ensuring that the finish is long, dry and satisfying.

Wine Analysis: Alcohol 13.5% Acidity 7.4 g/L pH 3.1 Residual sugar 1.6 g/L

Vineyard & Winemaking

It would be safe to say that Sauvignon Blanc is now embedded in the culinary culture of New Zealand. Our “estate” Sauvignon Blanc celebrates this in such a way as to invite people to try something a little different while maintaining some of the stylistic bent from our northern neighbours. It is sourced principally from two blocks on the property. About half the grapes come from the upper block from old vines planted in 1989 on Glasnevin gravels and mixed between grafted and own rooted vines. We find that there is a marked difference between the two with the own roots providing a broader range of green and ripe flavours, higher bandwidth if you will, while the grafted vines grow more uniformly and therefore produce more consistent ripeness across the block. The other half is grown on a low terrace beside the Waipara River in what we call Hell block. These vines are slightly younger and take water direct from the river so grown a bit more vigorously giving us very intense “Thiol” precursors in the juice and contribute more intense passionfruit, gooseberry and flint in the wine. This year we also included a sliver of fruit from our favourite M block that grows more like Chardonnay than Sauvignon which lends itself beautifully to high solids barrel fermentation and leaves a delicious stain of intensity long after the last swallow.

While the winemaking may appear deceptively simple there are many subtleties in processing this kind of fruit to faithfully elicit the most striking characters from the vineyard. Unlike our northern cousins in Marlborough we prefer a tad more ripeness in our Sauvignon. So the wine tends to be a little less aggressive, more subtle, but no less interesting. We have learned that different blocks produce distinctly different flavours therefore the winemaking is slightly different with skin contact times, enzyme use and temperature all playing a critical role in extracting juice with the right balance of flavour. Couple this with different fermentation treatments such as yeast strain, juice solids levels, nutrition regimes, fermentation rates and lees handling and we wind up with some lovely componentry with which to blend this wine.

Harvest date: 27 - 31 March 2015 Brix 22.5 - 23.5 Acidity 9.3 - 10.3 g/L pH 3.03- 3.22

Awards

International Wine & Spirit Competition 2016 - **Silver Medal**