



2016 Pinot Noir

Tasting Notes

The colour is an attractive, very bright ruby garnet with distinct crimson hues at the rim. Aromatically it is as striking as it is seductive. Bright red fruits - raspberry, strawberry and Morello cherry have immediate impact with an equally impressive array of oriental spices - anise and clove. Ripe seed aromas of almond kernel and cherry stone lift the nose. Time reveals an inner core of darker black cherry, and just a hint of bramble all kept in check by some very attractive yet subtle French oak. The palate is soft, silken and warm but with a certain nervosité which is to say that as a young wine it may appear both bright in acidity and forward in tannins, but that's just for starters. Those are simply the framework in which the wine is cradled, the fruit depth is palpable, the Pinosity generous and its presence authoritative. Give it time in bottle, at least 3 years we would gauge, and you will be rewarded with a fine, poised, Pinot that speaks volumes about where it is from and those that have produced it.

Wine Analysis: Alcohol 14.5% Residual Sugar 1 g/L pH 3.57 Acidity 6.1 g/L

Vineyard & Winemaking

It is estate grown in three blocks that while they share the same topography they differ slightly in their soil structure and their exposure to the wind. The "Old" block is somewhat of an heirloom in the Canterbury Pinot Noir story, planted as it is to the old Saint Helena selection made famous by the winery of that name in the early 1980's. These gentle old vines have their roots deep with the Glasnevin gravels that pervade on the upper terrace. They are not particularly productive nor are they overly vigorous so you could say we have achieved sustainable grapevine balance with this block. The bunches and berries are small giving good concentrated flavour, the skins are reasonably thick which helps build structure in the wine and they have this lovely sense of establishment that only old vines can give.

The other blocks are somewhat younger, planted to the more recently imported Dijon clones that makes up most of modern New Zealand Pinot Noir. These vines are more productive, more vigorous and tend to need more attention, a bit like willing millennials, they seem to take more time & energy to direct but when done so often produce remarkable results - a little like art imitating life.

During spring and summer of 2015-2016 we experienced one of the warmest, driest years on record. In fact, our very own weather station was made (in)famous on national television when it was revealed to be have the highest aridity index in the country for 2016. Apart from the extreme heat and general dryness the single biggest feature of the season was an extraordinary dump of rain in mid-January that really plumped up the Dijon clones and set the vines up for ripening in a big way. After fermentation, the wines were put to barrel to quietly mature over the next 14 months. After plenty of tasting, discussion, deselection, re-selection and what can only be described as high level hand wringing it was racked and blended just prior to harvest then put back to barrel to allow the components to harmonise before eventually bottling in late July 2017.

Harvest dates: 8 - 28 April Brix 23.5 -24.2 pH 3.2 Acidity 8.5 - 9.5 g/L