



2016 Sauvignon Blanc

Tasting Notes

In the glass the wine is an appealing pale straw yellow with green hues. Aromatically it is one of the more striking Sauvignons we have made, with Hell block shining through showing its characteristic passionfruit, elderflower and lime aromatics. On the palate it is fresh, crisp and dry. Hell block leads the charge as the wine explodes in the mouth. The upper terrace fruit in all its fleshy glory gives mid palate weight and the small amount of barrel ferment knits the wine together with its struck match flint and slightly sweaty, salty goodness.

Wine Analysis: Alcohol 12.5% Residual Sugar 1.8 g/L pH 3.10 Acidity 6.9 g/L

Vineyard & Winemaking

The three blocks on which we grow Sauvignon Blanc could not be more different. From the affectionately known "Hell Block" closest to the river we have the most recent derivations of river alluvium, interspersed with reasonably fertile silts. The vines here grow vigorously, giving us a large leafy canopy, moderately large bunches of very juicy, flavourful berries. Our viticulture here is designed to target the impressive suite of thiol-related aroma compounds that give rise to New Zealand's signature white wine – passionfruit, gooseberry, elderflower and lime. The mid terrace, planted on moderately weathered "Eyre" soils have lower fertility and impart less vigour in the vines. The flavours here tend to be softer, richer and have a thrilling mineral vein running through them, this is where the bones on the wine come from. The top terrace on the "Glasnevin Gravels" is the lowest fertility soil. These vines also show the lowest vigour, have the highest degree of sun exposure and therefore have the lowest acidity, broad tropical flavours and satisfying mid-palate flesh.

The 2016 growing season was a classic El Nino season typified by strong, warm nor'westerly airflows over the whole country. Flowering came early and full, meaning we had to strictly manage yields to ensure complete ripeness. By mid-January we were getting low on water & the upper terraces began to show signs of water stress. But then as is often the way with mother nature we had what could only be described as a mid-summer deluge of rain that filled the gaps between the stones and gave our vines the soil moisture required to complete the growing season with ease.

Each block was hand harvested with Hell block coming in first when the green and grassy flavours were at optimum. A period of skin contact ensured that we extracted all the flavour out of the skins and careful, cool tank fermentation with selected yeasts made sure we retained them. The mid terrace block was also hand harvested but run off to barrel for wild ferment on full solids, giving us a wonderful funky complexity and lovely palate structure. The upper block was harvested last when it was fully ripe giving us plush, exotic, tropical fruit characters, low-ish acidity and silky texture. After blending the wine spent a 3 month period on yeast lees and was bottled in mid-spring 2016.

Harvest dates: 6 - 19 April Brix 20.5 - 22 pH 3.05 - 3.16 Acidity 8.3 - 8.5 g/L

Awards

Decanter World Wine Awards 2017 – **Bronze medal**
International Wine & Spirit Competition 2017 – **Bronze Medal**