



2017 N Block Chardonnay

Tasting Notes

The wine at bottling is an attractive straw green colour with lovely highlights of lemon curd, brioche and flint. The palate is crisp and poised, rather like a coiled spring ready to slowly unwind over the next few years. It is a wine to enjoy in the medium term, say over the next 2-5 years from release while the doughy lees notes develop into the fruit and the acid resolves into the alcohol. We really think this style of Chardonnay is Waipara's great white hope, forgoing opulence for elegance, subtle power and a delicious drinkability that makes you reach for another glass.

Wine Analysis: Alcohol 13.0% Residual Sugar: <1 g/L pH: 3.2 Acidity: 7.1 g/L

Vineyard & Winemaking

The 2017 season was cool, even by our own standards. Compressed as it was between two record producing heat waves in 2016 & 2018, the 2017 wines are definitely in the more structured camp. Spring saw quite varied bud-burst so the vineyard team had to thin quite selectively to ensure uniform growth. As summer slowly progressed, the fruit set quite loose bunches with small berries which turned out to be an advantage given what was to come. Mid-January saw a huge deluge of rain, most uncharacteristic of the North Canterbury region, one in which TV pictures of parched paddocks and struggling sheep are common. Instead, we had green vineyards, green canopies, nary a drop of irrigation was applied and the vines didn't seem to mind at all. Harvest began in early April with clean, ripe fruit hitting the press & progressed over the next 3 weeks as each block ripened.

We fermented each batch in tank, with a few fleshier components going to older barrels, then used a judicious amount of malolactic to soften the rather challenging acidity. Intermittent lees stirring added a nice textural dimension to the wine and then holding the wine on those lees for a further year's 'elevage' helped bring the structural components together.

Harvest dates: 4 -24 April Brix: 21.2 - 22.4 pH: 3.12 - 3.24 Acidity: 9.1 - 10.5 g/L

Awards

International Wine Challenge 2019 - **Bronze Medal**