

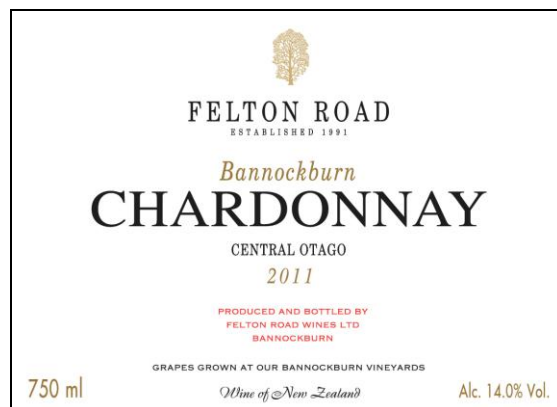


## FELTON ROAD

### 2011 Felton Road Chardonnay *Bannockburn*

#### *Tasting Note*

*Citrus blossom leads a wave of petrichor (rain on wet stones that is!) stonefruit and citrus zest on the nose. The palate is textural yet restrained, starting with flowers and citrus before the serious onset of chalky, pebbly minerality. The oak is seamlessly integrated, with not a trace to detract from this unique expression of a Bannockburn Chardonnay.*



#### *Introduction*

Beginning with meticulous site selection and vineyard design started in 1991, Felton Road's story is one of refusal to compromise. A strict 100% estate policy with fully organic and biodynamic viticulture ensures that our fruit arrives at the winery as pure as it can be, while our entire estate comes as close to true sustainability as is possible. A commitment to hands off winemaking: gravity flow, wild yeasts, wild malo, an avoidance of fining and filtration all help preserve the wine's expression of its terroir. No additions or adjustments are performed unless they absolutely need to be. The result is Riesling, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir which we believe express the authenticity and complexity of our unique vineyards.

Gareth King; Viticulturist, Blair Walter; Winemaker, Nigel Greening; Proprietor.

#### *Vineyard & Viticulture*

Felton Road farms three properties totaling 32 ha in the Bannockburn sub-region of Central Otago. Meticulous summer management of a single vertical shoot positioned (VSP) canopy ensures even and early fruit maturity. Shoot thinning, shoot positioning, leaf plucking, bunch thinning and harvest are all carried out by hand to ensure optimum quality fruit. Cover crops are planted between rows to assist in vine balance and to improve soil health and general biodiversity

#### *Vintage*

The growing season was most unusual with spring being the warmest and most stable to date and no frosts. We experienced a very early, fast and successful flowering which resulted in solid crops across all varieties. We were relieved to see things cool down in January, which set the pattern for a cooler and wetter mid-season. The description "wetter" must be read with respect to our normal very low rainfall, so still not a lot of rain. The weather settled for a flawless and warm Indian summer during harvest. There was no rain and the harvest started very early on March 21. We see the wines as being less overtly fruity (possibly a good thing as overtly fruity wines can appear one dimensional and simple) with reasonably firm structures and a pleasant kind of rusticity about them. Precision, mineral and tension will be good descriptors for the 2011's.

#### *Vinification*

Various clones of Chardonnay (Mendoza, B95, B548, 15 and 6) were carefully hand harvested in late March and early April from Calvert, Cornish Point and The Elms vineyards. The grapes were whole bunch pressed with the juice drained immediately to barrel by gravity with no settling. Fermentation in French oak (15% new) with indigenous yeasts has produced a wine with considerable complexity. A long slow indigenous malolactic fermentation with only periodic stirring of the lees (Batonnage), along with 12 months on full lees; has softened the acid for a rich and complex mouthfeel.

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