



## FELTON ROAD

### 2011 Felton Road Vin Gris

#### *Tasting Note*

*We debated how to describe the colour: think 9 carat gold with the merest reflection of copper, maybe freshly cut maple wood. By no stretch of the imagination would anybody think rosé, yet this is made from free-run Pinot Noir juice. The nose is wild strawberries and a hint of cream. The palate is intensely textural and mineral, with the flavours continuing the strawberry and cream theme. This is sophisticated stuff, not simply a lunchtime amusement.*

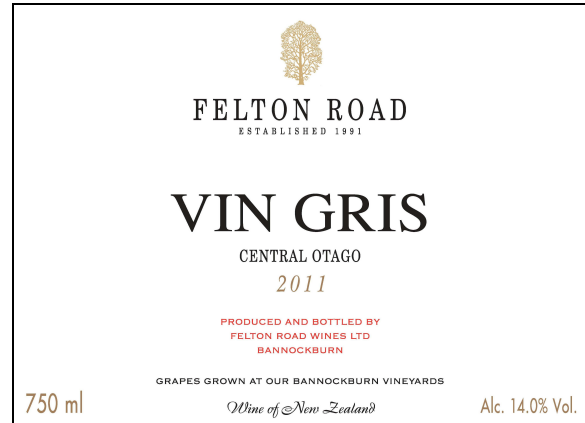
#### *Introduction*

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 (Demeter certified) 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 vineyard 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*

Vin Gris (*vahn gree*) is made from free-run Pinot Noir juice and is only produced in certain vintages. The slightly larger berry size and bunches from some parts of the vineyard prompted us to perform a saignée of about 10% on some of our Pinot Noir, resulting in this Vin Gris. Free-run juice is taken from the Pinot Noir fermenters immediately following destemming in order to concentrate the remaining fruit. This very short skin contact time results in the very pale copper colour of this Vin Gris. Fermentation in stainless steel tanks with indigenous yeast followed by complete malolactic fermentation and ageing on the gross lees built palate weight and complexity.

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