



FELTON ROAD

2017 Felton Road Chardonnay *Block 2*

Tasting Note

A lifted and bright nose of white peach and alluring crisp tropical fruit, discretely integrated with subtle baking spice and wet stone. Block 2's 25 year old vines and deep schist gravel soils are plainly evident in the distinct minerality. Considerable breadth across the mid-palate and bright acidity gives great poise and length. The winemaking is virtually invisible, allowing great clarity and detail of the site. With 16 months in barrel, no new oak, no fining, no filtering: this is just Block 2 in its simplest and most refined form.

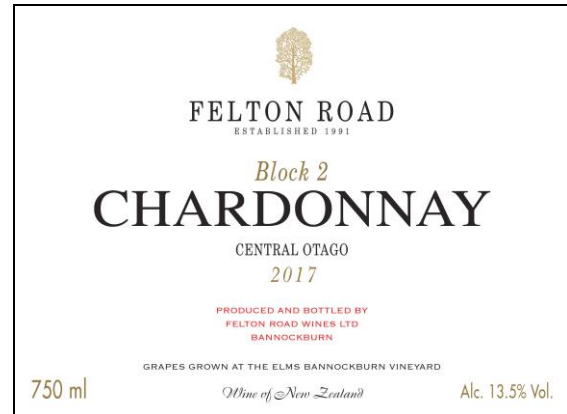
Introduction

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. The result is Riesling, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir which accurately express the authenticity and complexity of our unique vineyards.

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

Vineyard & Viticulture

Felton Road farms four properties totaling 32 ha in the Bannockburn sub-region of Central Otago. Block 2 was planted in 1992 and is positioned on a gentle east facing slope of deep angular schist soils immediately north of Block 3 on The Elms vineyard. 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 end of winter and spring 2016 was as warm and sustained as we have ever experienced, resulting in an early bud-break and fast even growth. Summer saw westerly winds concurrent with cool overnight temperatures pulling in the reins, slowing growth to a gentler pace. Relatively cool temperatures and high rainfall in January offered succour to both the canopies and understory. As was the case for heat summation, our season's rainfall seemed to have been provided early. Small shattered bunches from unsettled weather over December's flowering period reduced demand on the vines during the cooler, dry periods that occurred during the later parts of summer. Nature provided us with a perfect outcome to an unusual season characterised by a fast start and slow finish. Pinot Noir and Chardonnay were harvested swiftly from March 29th with both varieties complete within a week.

Vinification

Mendoza clone Chardonnay from Block 2 was whole bunch pressed and flowed immediately (without settling) by gravity to barrel in the underground cellar. Fermentation with indigenous yeasts in seasoned French oak (no new oak) was followed by a long and complete malolactic over the spring and summer. After 16 months in barrel the wine was racked to tank for bottling in early-September 2018. The wine was not fined or filtered.

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