



FELTON ROAD

2008 Felton Road Pinot Noir Block 3

Tasting Note

As is often the case, the initial entry of the wine is the lightest of all the 2008 Pinot Noirs: expressing crushed herbs and minerality.

Then the wine starts to build through the palate as earthy raspberry and cherry kick in, stepping up a gear as chocolate, mocha and minerality combine with rich, fine tannin to overwhelm the fruit in a long and very powerful finish.

Textbook Block 3.

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 season started with good soil moistures after a relatively wet spring. Warm, stable and sunny weather during flowering resulted in a successful fruit set with moderate to large crops. Above average rainfall throughout the summer months led to healthy canopies with a much decreased dependence on irrigation, and in parts of the vineyard with heavier soils, no irrigation for the whole growing season. That is not to suggest a wet year: weather was mild, even, near perfect from a wine perspective. Cool night time temperatures leading up to the harvest slowed the ripening so that harvest proceeded over a 4 week period starting on March 25. The harvest period was very dry and the fruit was, as usual, in very good condition with a crop of larger berries, but with a lot of seeds and relatively thick skins. Thankfully, vintage was completed by April 23 after which the weather turned very cold with unseasonal snow in the vineyards and heavy rain at the end of April.

Vinification

The unique gravity flow winery enabled the grapes to be gently destemmed directly into open-top fermenters without pumping with approximately 20% as whole clusters. Traditional fermentation with a moderately long maceration on skins has extracted good colour and tannin with considerable depth of flavour. This wine was aged for 11 months in French oak barrels from highly regarded Burgundian coopers. In accordance with our non-interventionalist approach to winemaking, this wine was fermented with indigenous yeast and was not fined or filtered.

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