



FELTON ROAD

2009 Felton Road Chardonnay *Bannockburn*

Tasting Note

At this early stage of its life the wine is pert and lively with spring flowers and citrus blossom on the nose and a hint of hazelnut. The palate is smooth, racy and seamless, with a full texture, but a lithe and taught structure. It is clean and long in the finish and while delicious now, will take some bottle age to start to evolve the evident complexity that lies in wait.

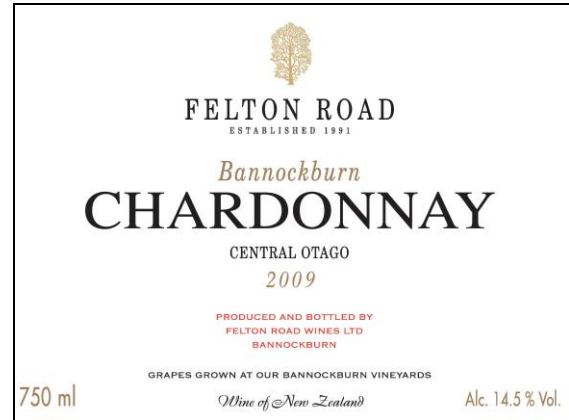
Introduction

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 a normal spring, neither hot nor cool with normal rainfall. There were the usual occasional frost events that were able to be successfully fought. Good weather over flowering resulted in an excellent fruit set. The summer was on the cool side and then February which is normally our warmest and most stable month, was unseasonably cool and wet (although wet for us is still only 48mm but falling on six occasions). In recognition of the cooler summer and then the cool February we were determined to keep crop levels down, so crop thinned more aggressively than normal. Also in recognition of the wet February, we leaf plucked exposing the fruit which is not usual for us. March was a return to normal warm and stable weather and the vines ripened very smoothly and holding great canopy despite the challenges in the weather.

Vinification

A selection was made in the vineyard of the more intensely flavoured Chardonnay grapes (Mendoza clone) for barrel fermentation. Fully ripe grapes were carefully hand harvested and whole bunch pressed to minimise phenolic pick-up and retain flavour intensity. The juice was then drained (without settling) directly to barrel in the underground cellar. Fermentation in French oak (only 10% new) with indigenous yeasts has produced a wine with considerable complexity. A long slow malolactic fermentation and regular stirring of the lees (Batonnage) has softened the acid for a rich creamy mouthfeel.

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