

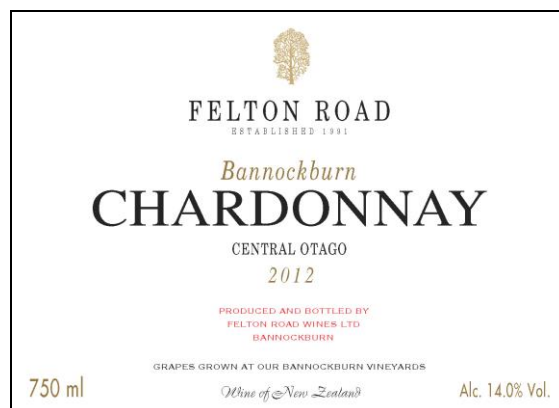


FELTON ROAD

2012 Felton Road Chardonnay *Bannockburn*

Tasting Note

Brilliant lemon gold with a seamlessly integrated nose; floral with subtle hazelnut notes and white peach. Minerality predominates over delicate lemon zest and crisp acid. Very textural on the palate, full not fat. Long, fresh and clean on the finish with not a hint of oak. This wine is unfiltered and unfiltered, the first time we have achieved this with our 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 (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 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 spring started with warm temperatures and dry soils which encouraged even and strong early season growth. However, cooler and wetter weather set in for the remainder of spring. Flowering occurred in early December amongst hot and sunny conditions and was therefore fast and successful. The later part of the summer was punctuated by almost weekly cool southerly weather systems which moderated ripening and were somewhat welcomed after such a hot mid-summer period. Rain associated with some of these weather events meant vine mid-rows were green, vine canopies were healthy, but without excessive vigour, and little requirement for supplemental irrigation. The weather over harvest was warm and stable with a very orderly flow of fruit to the winery.

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 (10% 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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