



FELTON ROAD

2023 Felton Road Chardonnay *Block 2*

Tasting Note

An enticing nose of lemon and elderflower blossom, citrus notes and crushed stones, sets the scene for this vineyard expressive Chardonnay. It's all about the schist soils, the ideal growing season, carefully guided and gently raised, rather than winemaking. The harmoniously integrated acidity tightens the core, giving length and focus. A classic Block 2 that speaks eloquently to its usual fine and elegant style.

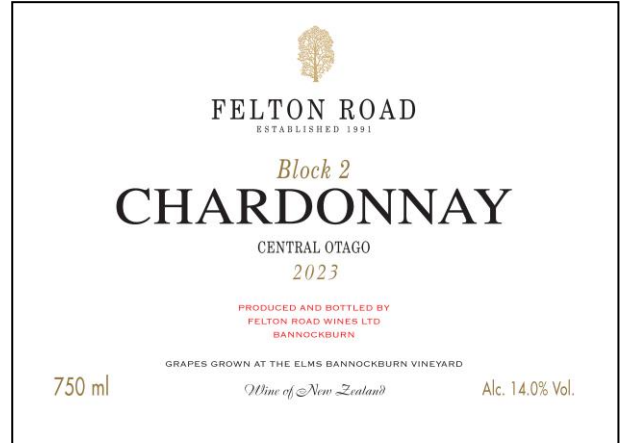
Introduction

Commencing with meticulous site selection and vineyard design in 1991, Felton Road's story is one of refusal to compromise. A strict 100% estate policy with fully organic and biodynamic viticulture (BioGro and 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, indigenous yeasts and malolactic, 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 34 ha in the Bannockburn subregion 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

Spring temperatures and rainfall were normal with only a couple of mild frost events which were successfully fought. Flowering proceeded in warm and relatively stable weather and resulted in setting a normal sized crop across all three varieties. December was warm and dry with these conditions further exacerbated over the next several weeks until a welcome rain event on February 21. With the relatively dry conditions prevailing for the previous months, this event and the periodic rain throughout March (but still only 43mm recorded), did not present any disease pressure issues and provided welcome relief to the warm and somewhat previous stressful conditions. Cooler night temperatures arrested the ripening for slow and steady development. Harvest commenced on March 23, and fears of an early, hot and fast harvest were fortunately not realised.

Vinification

Mendoza clone Chardonnay from Block 2 was whole bunch pressed, settled overnight and flowed by gravity to barrel in the underground cellar. Fermentation with indigenous yeasts in seasoned French oak (only 4% new) was followed by a long and complete malolactic over the spring and summer. After 17 months in barrel (11 months on gross lees), the wine was carefully racked to tank for bottling in late-August, 2024. The wine was not fined or filtered.