



## FELTON ROAD

### 2023 Felton Road Pinot Noir *Block 5*

#### *Tasting Note*

*A perfectly seamless and finely balanced nose, asserting Block 5's hallmark elegance and refinement. The palate opens subtly, but expands generously in the manner of the great Pinot Noir descriptor of peacock's tail. Encompassing, harmonious with not a single component jostling for recognition - it's just mature 30-year-old vines doing their business. The precision of fruit and flavour, combined with silk laden tannins, bring it all to an immensely satisfying finish.*

#### **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 5 is situated on a gentle north facing slope in the heart of The Elms vineyard and was planted in 1993. The soils vary up the slope from heavy loess and silt, clay lakebed deposits, and angular schist gravels. 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**

20% of the fruit was retained as whole clusters with the remainder carefully de-stemmed directly to the fermenters by gravity without harsh pumping. Long pre-fermentation soaks of 8-10 days prior to fermentation with indigenous yeasts and punched down by hand up to two times per day with a total time on skins of 21-25 days. Pressed off and barrels filled immediately by gravity to the underground barrel cellars. The wine spent 16 months in barrel (25% new French) with two rackings and no fining or filtration, before bottling in late-August 2024.