

Chardonnay

2019

I have long been an advocate of the fruit-forward style of Chardonnay and of the opinion that Martinborough fruit favours this fresher and slightly simpler expression of the variety. However, as the majority of our Chardonnay vines approach their 30th year in the ground, the texture and flavour profiles of the fruit have matured in tandem with vine age. Fresh pineapple and grapefruit have morphed into deeper and fleshier flavours of ripe nectarine with lush sub-tropical notes while the fine-tuned and often zippy structure has mellowed into something more nutty and mealy which lends itself to our recently adapted technique of 100% malolactic and increased lees *bâtonnage*. Taken together, the result is a broader, softer and more complex wine.

There is a look of molten gold to the wine in the glass and when it rises to the nose it speaks of butterscotch, orange blossom and salted macadamia nuts. It fills the nostrils with a heavy handed brush and sports Christmas Lily, rough stacked barn hay, ricotta cheese and baked kumara. White fleshed peach, apple and mango are carried along with milk and honey, toasted sesame seed and a soft mealy edge which exacerbates the anticipation.

The palate opens fair, fat and wide and shimmies down the aisle with a prickly assertiveness. Pungent guava and rich stewed prunes meld with heavy mocca and crunchy oatmeal granola. Like a dark night spent in the wilderness, there is a sweet/sour quality and the zing of a long saw ripping through native timber, with the taste of fresh sawdust palpable. A thickness fills the mouth, smoothing over every nook and cranny like polycell, while an ethereal breadth keeps the wine alive in the finish long after the embers have died.

Technical Information

Harvest Date	28 Mar – 3 Apr 2019	Residual Sugar	Nil
Brix at Harvest	22.3 – 23.4	Bottling Date	17 Mar 2020
Final Alcohol	13.5 %	Release Date	1 Oct 2020
pH	3.09	Cellaring	2 – 6 years
Total Acid	6.25g/l		

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