Chardonnay RM

_____ This is where the story starts. In 1993 I arrived in Hawke's Bay with a love for making wine and everything I owned packed into the boot of a small car. The plan was to figure out where to plant the best small vineyards as the first step towards unlocking the full potential of Chardonnay grown and raised in Hawke's Bay. We're up to five so far.

I first visited Burgundy, the spiritual home of great Chardonnay, in 1995. Apart from the amazing vineyards and wines, what struck me was the sense of tradition, community and the pursuit of small improvements in all aspects of their production. Their winemaking was incredibly intuitive, left plenty of room for nuance and there was a lot of joy in the process. Chardonnay, more than any other white grape variety planted here, tells a story about where it was grown and who made it. I believe it will become the most important white grape variety in Hawke's Bay. It'll become our trademark.

2019 TRADEMARK CHARDONNAY RM

Perfectly ripe fruit with a moderate acidity and an average of 22.5 brix produced a lusciously flavoured lemon, melon, nectarine all layered together. Planted on an 25 year old vineyard in Havelock North at the base of Te Mata Peak and grown carefully to extend hang time and allow a slow ripening before harvesting by hand. Whole bunches were pressed and the juice fed by gravity into French oak barriques for a natural wild ferment. The wine rested through the cool winter temperatures. We allowed a few of the barrels to warm up in Spring and complete a natural malolactic ferment before bottling in March 2020.

TASTE
A wine made for cellaring, with future complexity at its heart. Struck stone and flint on the nose with lemon curd, stone-fruit and a biscuit layered lees influence. The palate is initially tight but unfolds with time in the glass or cellar, and seamless with a persistent long finish.

Rod McDonald

Rod McDonald, Winemaker

Varietal: 100% Hawke's Bay gold
Alc/Vol: 13.5%
Standard drinks: 8.0
Allergens: Contains sulphites