

Felton Road,
`Block 6` Chardonnay 2023
Bannockburn, Central Otago, New Zealand



FELTON ROAD



Grape Varieties	100% Chardonnay
Winemaker	Blair Walter
Closure	Screwcap
ABV	14%
Residual Sugar	1.05g/L
Acidity	5.7g/L
Wine pH	3.09
Bottle Sizes	75cl
Notes	Certified Biodynamic, Certified Organic, Vegetarian, Vegan

PRODUCER

In the late 1990s, British entrepreneur Nigel Greening was living in New Zealand. A serious Burgundy collector, he was soon captivated by the nascent Pinot Noirs of Central Otago. By 2000, through sheer determination, countless tastings and research, he had bought a vineyard in Cornish Point, as well as the original Felton Road Elms Vineyard from founder Stewart Elms. Together with winemaker Blair Walter, Nigel is the self-taught visionary behind what is widely regarded as one of New Zealand's top producers of Pinot Noir.

VINEYARDS

Situated in the Bannockburn subregion of Central Otago, Block 6 was planted in 1993 and is positioned on a north facing slope. The site's elevation (282-300m) and steep slope favourably intercept the sun but does result in greater exposure to wind. Meticulous management of the vertical shoot positioned (VSP) canopy ensures even maturation. Cover crops are planted between rows to assist in vine balance and to improve soil health and 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 an average 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 in February. 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 23rd March, and fears of an early, hot and fast harvest were fortunately not realised.

VINIFICATION

The fruit, predominantly Mendoza and some Dijon clone 95 Chardonnay, was whole bunch pressed and settled overnight before being gravity fed to barrel in an underground cellar. Fermentation took place in seasoned French oak barrels (only 6% new) using only indigenous yeasts. This was followed by a long and complete malolactic fermentation over the spring and summer. After 17 months in barrel, of which 11 months were spent on gross lees, the wine was carefully racked into stainless steel tanks for bottling. The wine was not fined or filtered.

TASTING NOTES

The exposed and north facing slope of Block 6 develops ripe fruit flavours and a bold bouquet. Intriguing nutty and brioche notes are paired with a mineral freshness. A distinct brightness carries through to the long finish.

LIBERTY WINES