



Pegasus Bay Reserve

PRIMA DONNA

Pinot Noir 2019

THE FAMILY

The Donaldson Family have been seriously involved in viticulture and winemaking for over 40 years. Founder Ivan Donaldson planted the first Canterbury vineyard in 1976 and went on to establish Pegasus Bay in 1986 with his wife Christine. It is a true family business, with all four of their sons involved.

THE VINEYARD AND THE VINES

The vineyard is located within the Waipara Valley of North Canterbury, on free draining, north facing terraces. It benefits from being in the lee of the Teviotdale Range, giving maximum protection from the Pacific's easterly breezes and thus creating a unique mesoclimate. The vines are over 30 years old, with a large proportion planted on their own roots. They are located on the "Glasnevin Gravels" where greywacke stones, silt and loam have been washed down from the mountains over the millennia. The soil is of low fertility, resulting in naturally reduced vine vigour. This produces low yields of optimally ripened, high quality, flavourful grapes, which fully express the qualities of this unique terroir. The vineyard has warm days, but the nights are amongst the coolest in the Waipara Valley, drawing out the ripening period of the grapes, while still retaining good natural acidity.

THE SEASON

Unsettled weather over flowering resulted in a lighter than average set, meaning that no further fruit thinning was necessary. A classic North Canterbury summer then enabled this smaller crop to mature beautifully. Accelerated ripening allowed harvest to take place slightly earlier than usual, and favourable autumn weather ensured the grapes were picked in perfect condition.

HARVEST AND WINE MAKING

Prima Donna is part of our reserve series which we only make in exceptional years, provided it does not compromise the quality of our estate wines. It is a selection from the best barrels, coming from some of the oldest ungrafted plantings in the vineyard, characterised by small berries and loose open bunches. As with all our Pinot's, we use traditional Burgundian winemaking methods. Approximately 40% of the grapes were put at the bottom of the fermentation vats as whole bunches, with the balance being destemmed on top, retaining as many whole berries as possible. The vats were kept cool over the next few days to help extract the soft, silky tannins from the pinot noir skins. After approx a week, the must started to ferment naturally. During fermentation the skins of the grapes were gently plunged twice daily. When the fermentation finished, the grape remnants were left to steep in the wine for up to a week to help extract a different range of tannins that add structure and depth. The exact duration of this period was determined by daily tasting. Subsequently the wine was gently pressed off and put into oak barriques (approx 40% new) from selected artisan Burgundian coopers. In the summer after harvest, when the weather warmed, the wine underwent a natural malo-lactic (secondary) fermentation. After maturing for 14 months, a selection from the best barriques was chosen and carefully blended, to produce the most complex and balanced wine possible.



THE WINE

Upon release it has a deep ruby hue. The nose is a sultry amalgam of spiced plum, red currant and dark cherry, leading to a savoury cinnamon, mushroom and crushed thyme. Fine grained tannins and a concentrated core of ripe fruit thrill the palate, presenting a luxurious mouthfeel. Well integrated acidity adds perfect balance and poise, setting the platform for a long and harmonious close. This is a wine with real power and drive, yet delivered with precision and finesse. While ready to drink on release it can be expected to cellar well and evolve gracefully for many years.

underlay of earth, leather,

HARVEST DATE	BRIX AT HARVEST	ALCOHOL CONTENT	R.S	T.A.	AGING POTENTIAL
25th March - 4th April 2019	24	13 %	Dry	5.1 g/l	12+ years