

PEGASUS BAY

FINE WAIPARA WINE



PRIMA DONNA Pinot Noir 2009

TASTING NOTE



The Season: An exceptionally early budburst was brought about by a very mild spring. Warm summer days followed by an early, dry autumn with cool nights produced healthy, perfectly ripened grapes with vibrant fruit flavours. It was a splendid season in general and an exceptional one for pinot noir, producing wines of high quality.

The Vineyard and the Vines: We have about a dozen different clones planted in our pinot noir blocks. The vines, many of which are 25 years old and on their own roots, grow on a series of north facing, gradually descending terraces. While the site is warm during the day it is cool at night, which allows the fruit to ripen fully while retaining its natural acids. The drainage is helped by stones intermingled with the soil. The crops in 2009 were on the light side, but very well balanced.

Harvest and Wine Making: We use traditional Burgundian winemaking methods. After picking in mid-April, the grapes, without their stems, were put into small fermenting vats, retaining as many whole berries as possible. They were kept cool over the next few days to help extract the soft, silky tannins from their skins. After this time the grapes had warmed enough to start fermenting. During fermentation the floating cap of grape skins was twice daily gently pushed back under the wine by hand, to keep it moist and healthy. When the fermentation finished the grape remnants were left to steep in the wine for another two weeks to help extract other tannins which add structure and depth. The duration of this period was determined by daily tasting. Subsequently the wine was drained off and put into oak barriques (30% new) from selected artisan Burgundian coopers. In the summer after harvest, when the weather warmed, the wine underwent malo-lactic (secondary) fermentation. Both this and the original fermentation phase were completely natural with no added micro-organisms. Prima Donna is made in only special years and 2009 was definitely one of these. After maturing for

18 months we select the barriques which best reflect our vineyard and the season. Typically these come from our oldest vines. The wine is then carefully blended according to taste to produce Prima Donna.

The Wine: On release the wine has a vibrant crimson hue. The unfolding aroma is multi-layered and complex, suggesting bright red fruits, blackberries, raspberries, black cherries and purple plums. There are also savoury nuances reminiscent of roast meats and grilled mushrooms, intermingled with whiffs of wood-smoke. The palate entry is seductively light but the wine seems to expand in the mouth to become rich and muscular, while retaining an even flow of velvety, but tangy, tannins. These at the same time excite but soothe the taste buds and draw out the wine's long lingering finish. Although it will be enjoyed on release, with careful cellaring it should develop other fascinating nuances over the next decade and live well beyond this.



Wine in moderation is a natural health food.