

PEGASUS BAY

FINE WAIPARA WINE



Chardonnay 2008

TASTING NOTE



The Season: Warm and dry conditions prevailed during spring and early summer so that we became concerned the vines might be affected by drought. Luckily we had a brief torrential downpour in February which set the dry streams gurgling merrily and replenished the groundwater reserves. The rest of the summer was excellent. While we had humid conditions in late autumn we had exposed the fruit to the sunlight so it ripened beautifully and remained perfectly healthy.

Wine Making: We utilised traditional Burgundian techniques in making this chardonnay. After picking, the fruit was gently pressed and the juice put into barrels without any attempt to clarify it. There it underwent spontaneous primary fermentation by the grapes' own yeasts. We used only large barrels, puncheons made by artisan French coopers, to avoid excessive extraction of oak flavours. Only a third of these were new. When the fermentation was finished the barrels were topped and the wine left on its deposit (sur lie) to mature in the cool of the cellar. In the summer after harvest, when the cellar warmed, the wine underwent natural secondary or malo-lactic fermentation. While each puncheon started this fermentation, the exact extent to which it was allowed to progress was determined by regular tasting of all the barrels. When it was felt an optimal balance had been achieved yeast lees were removed and this fermentation stopped. After a year it was removed from the puncheons and put into tank where it was allowed time to integrate prior to bottling.

The Wine: The wine shows a complex interplay of aromas and flavours. There are the primary elements derived from the fruit, suggesting lemons, limes, green-gages and peaches. These are intertwined with whiffs of wood smoke, barbequed sweet corn and grilled bacon. It has a soft palate entry but then gradually seems to expand in the mouth to become rich and full bodied. A back-bone of minerality and grapefruit-like acidity keep it tight knit and focused, drawing out its length. While ready to drink on release it should develop a range of additional nuances with careful cellaring.

Wine in moderation is a natural health food