

PEGASUS BAY

FINE WAIPARA WINE



PRIMA DONNA Pinot Noir 2006

TASTING NOTE



The growing season was longer than usual as mild spring weather resulted in early bud-burst, but was followed by cool nights which prevented excessively rapid growth. We had good accumulation of summer heat and a long, dry autumn. Harvest was, as usual, in April. The fruit was beautifully physiologically ripe when picked, but yet had good levels of natural acid without excessive concentration of sugar.

In making this wine, we have employed traditional Burgundian techniques. After picking, the fruit was put into open top vats, our aim being to retain the individual berries whole, we also included about 10% whole bunches. The vats were kept cool for 5 or 6 days and then allowed to gradually warm. At this stage primary fermentation commenced by the action of the grapes' own yeasts and we started twice daily manual plunging of the floating cap of grapes to keep it moist and healthy. This was carried out very gently to avoid excessive extraction of rough tannins and it was continued throughout the 4-6 days of the fermentation phase. After this there followed a period of post-fermentation maceration, during which we also manually pushed down the floating cap of skins once a day. The total time in vat or cuvaision, varied from batch to batch but was in the order of 3-4 weeks. The time of pressing for each vat was decided by daily tasting to assess the tannins. The new wine was then put into the barriques, 45% new, of French artisan coopers.

When the winery warmed in the summer after harvest, the wine in these barriques underwent spontaneous secondary or malo-lactic fermentation by the action of their own natural indigenous micro-organisms. It remained in barriques for a total of 18 months. The multiple individual batches were then tasted and the final blend or assemblage made prior to bottling.

This wine was made from a selection of our best barrels which were, as usual, from our oldest vines.

At the time of release, the wine has a rich, ruby hue with a hint of vermillion. The aromas and flavours show complex intertwining of fruity and savoury elements. Berry fruits, such as raspberries and blackberries mingle with ripe, black cherries, purple peaches and plums. There is a supporting underlay of roast game, grilled bacon, mushrooms and the scent of a wood fired barbeque. There is depth and concentration in the mouth, but it avoids being ponderous and heavy, remaining light and lively. The ripe tannins gradually expand on the palate so that the wine swells and becomes velvety and mouth-filling. There is a spine of natural acidity which keeps it tight knit and muscular.

While ready to drink on release, with careful cellaring it should develop additional layers of complexity for 8-12 years after harvest and live well beyond this.

Wine is a natural health food

