

THE PIONEER

2015 MARLBOROUGH CHARDONNAY

John Marris

ORIGIN

A blend of Chardonnay parcels based around a dominant component from the vineyard directly behind our Waihopai River winery.

This fruit has been skilfully blended with Chardonnay from Fairleigh Estate, a site previously owned and managed by John Marris, a true 'pioneer' of grape growing in Marlborough.

VARIETY

100% Chardonnay.

VINTAGE

Having survived a string of spring frosts, the timing of budburst was nearly identical to 2014 though a subsequent cooling off meant early vine development wasn't quite as vigorous as seen previously. November was dry, with temperatures slightly above average. December brought with it a noticeable drop in temperature and just shy of 10mm of rain. This coincided with the critical stages of flowering and fruit set and goes some way to explain the lighter than usual 2015 yields. By Christmas the weather had begun to warm up and we hit a sustained patch of hot, dry weather that lasted through to the middle of March before the weather broke and the district finally got some welcome rain.

WINEMAKING

Hand harvested and whole bunch pressed the resulting juices were warm fermented on full fruit solids in a range of large format French oak barrels. The young wines were left to mature on full yeast lees for a period of 10 months, with the occasional stir and as the weather warmed in early spring, malo-lactic fermentation was encouraged in approximately two thirds of the barrels.

ANALYSIS

Alcohol	13.5%
pH	3.37
Titrateable Acidity	5.5g/L
Residual Sugar	0.5g/L

TASTING NOTE

Elegant yet richly complex the aroma combines elements of white peach and ripe yellow citrus with nut studded nougat and a deliciously spicy, warm low toast oak.

Instantly weighty and plush the silky skinned palate shows much stronger elements of winemaker influence with a positive mealy, yeasty funk supporting the bright citrus – stonefruit core. Textural interest comes via a deftly balanced juxtaposition of ripe, juicy acids set against Waihopai River wet stone minerality that together create a sustained dry, grainy finish.

FOOD MATCHING

This wine will enhance dishes devoted to most white meats, spring lamb and rich fish dishes – why not try 2015 The Pioneer Chardonnay with a grilled leg of lamb with garlic and Dijon mustard, served alongside a generously butter laced roasted pumpkin mash.

CELLARING POTENTIAL

When matured in appropriate cellar conditions; this wine will continue to harmonise whilst growing in depth and complexity over the next 4 to 6 years.


CRAFT SERIES
MARLBOROUGH

