

Pegasus Bay Sauvignon Semillon 2017

The Story

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 and two spouses involved, managing various aspects.

The Vinyard

The vineyard is located within the Waipara Valley of North Canterbury, on free draining, north facing terraces carved out of New Zealand's Southern Alps by an ice-age glacier. 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. The soil is free draining and 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.

Vintage 2017

Variable conditions over flowering resulted in a moderate fruit set. The subsequent warm summer then allowed the grapes to ripen beautifully. Naturally smaller berry size and loose open bunches helped accelerate ripening, allowing us to pick the fruit a little earlier this season than usual.

Winemaking

This is a unique expression of a traditional white Bordeaux blend using approximately 70% Sauvignon Blanc & 30% Semillon. Both varieties were picked in stages during April, timing each harvest to optimise the grapes' range of natural flavours. These varieties were fermented separately, the majority of the Sauvignon in stainless steel to retain the pure fruit character, and all of the Semillon in oak puncheons to add texture. A small percentage of the Sauvignon Blanc was also matured in new French barrels to give extra length and complexity. Both varieties were aged on their natural deposits of yeast lees (sur lie) for approximately 10 mths, prior to blending. Once bottled, the wine was left to age for another year before release, allowing it to integrate further.



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Tasting Note

The colour is pale lemon with aromas of citrus blossom, lemon, gooseberry and passionfruit. There is also a hint of struck match complexity arising from skin contact during fermentation. The Semillon component helps fill out the palate, adding fruit weight, richness and age-ability, while also acting to restrain the exuberance of the sauvignon blanc. While the lees contact has added texture and body, the wine remains focussed, with a crisp refreshing acidity that emphasises its mineral notes.

Alcohol Percentage	13.7%
Residual Sugar	Dry
T.A.	8 g/L
Aging Potential	7 + years



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