

Pegasus Bay Estate Pinot Noir 2016

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 2016

Warm and settled weather during flowering led to a very large initial set. Fruit thinning was then undertaken to bring the crop back to the desired level. A perfect summer, followed by a warm dry autumn enabled the subsequent grapes to be harvested with excellent flavour development and physiological ripeness.

Winemaking

Traditional Burgundian winemaking methods were used to make this wine. We picked the various blocks at different stages, depending on their maturity, aiming for a range of red and dark fruit flavours. Approximately one third of the grapes were put at the bottom of the fermentation vats as whole bunches, with the balance being destemmed on top, retaining as many whole berries as possible. The vats were kept cool over the next few days to help extract the soft, silky tannins from the pinot noir skins. After approximately a week the must started to ferment naturally. During fermentation, the floating cap of grape skins was gently plunged twice daily. When the fermentation finished, the grape remnants were left to steep in the wine for up to a week to help extract a different range of tannins that add structure and depth. The exact duration of this period was determined by daily tasting. Subsequently the wine was gently pressed off and put into oak barriques (40% new) from selected artisan Burgundian coopers. In



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the summer after harvest, when the weather warmed, the wine underwent a natural malo-lactic (secondary) fermentation. After maturing for 18mths in these barriques, the batches made from the many different plots and clones of pinot were carefully blended in varying portions to produce the most complex and balanced wine possible.

Tasting Note

The wine has a vibrant ruby appearance. The bouquet is packed with red and dark fruit, (raspberry, pomegranate and cherry), with hints of pepper and spice. Layered beneath there are also savoury notes that speak of grilled game and black olive tapenade. The palate is satisfyingly concentrated with fine grained tannins, however there is a refreshing minerality which ensures the wine remains tight and focused, with a lasting finish. A slightly reduced time in oak has resulted in a harmonious style, one that is mouth-filling yet elegant.

Alcohol Percentage	13.5%
Residual Sugar	Dry
Ageing Potential	10 + years



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