

Blank Canvas

Blank Canvas Escaroth Vineyard Pinot Noir 2019

- Escaroth Vineyard | Taylor Pass | Marlborough -

TASTING NOTE Escaroth is a site that truly reflects vintage variation: this year's release simply ticks all the boxes for Pinot Noir fanatics. It has a beguiling, complex perfume that treads both red and blue fruit and an enchanting spice, game and earthy savouriness. The very low-yielding year (3.2 t/ha) coupled with the dry-farmed nature of the site has resulted in incredible concentration and intensity. 2019 was a year that demanded the use of whole-bunch to ensure balanced extraction and lifted aromatics. The result is a very complex, savoury Pinot Noir with a structured yet elegant tannin framework.

VINTAGE. 2019 on paper looked like an absolute dream vintage for Pinot Noir, but as many found out it was one where you could be very much caught off-guard. The very low-yielding nature of the vintage for Pinot Noir was a result of a combination of one of the driest growing seasons on record in Marlborough but also inclement weather during flowering and sizing. This meant small bunches and small berries with thick skins at harvest time. It was the complete antithesis of the very light and delicate 2018 vintage. It was a year where use of whole-bunch was essential to ensure balance and pinosity remained.

VITICULTURE Escaroth Vineyard is a unique north-facing, sloped, dry-farmed site in the middle of the Taylor Pass. Vines were planted in 2001, and particularly rare for Marlborough, it is dry-farmed. The Taylor Pass has the biggest diurnal range in all of Marlborough and is often the driest sub-region. The north-facing slope is essential for frost protection as well as exposure for ripening while the low-vigour old clay soils are perfect for Pinot Noir. The total Pinot Noir area is just under one hectare and is planted to Dijon clones 777 and 115. The vineyard is spur-pruned and VSP trained.

WINEMAKING. We hand-harvested the Escaroth Vineyard Pinot Noir on the 21st March 2019. 55% of the handpicked fruit was tipped into the open-tank fermenter with the balance crushed over the top. The fruit was kept cool until natural fermentation commenced after five days. The tank was hand-plunged throughout its 15-day fermentation period after which we drained and pressed the wine to barrel where it completed natural malolactic fermentation. The oak regime was 100% French oak barriques, all of low-toast level (35% new) for 12 months, with a further 3 months in tank to gently and naturally settle. We bottled the wine without filtration on the 3rd June 2020 and it was released on the 1st November 2021.

TECHNICAL ANALYSES

Alcohol	13.5%
pH	3.6
Acidity	5.3 g/L
Total SO ₂	34 mg/L
Residual sugar	Nil

ACCOLADES | 97 Cameron Douglas MS

