



Pegasus Bay Estate

Chardonnay

2011

THE SEASON

The season was influenced by La Nina weather conditions, resulting in a very mild spring, a warm summer with high sunshine hours and a long, lingering autumn. In spite of being dry we had infrequent, but well spaced showers keeping the vines very happy. At picking the fruit was in beautiful condition and was physiologically ripe.

THE VINEYARD AND THE VINES

The vines, which are almost 30 years old, grow on their own roots in well-drained stony soil on a series of north facing, gradually descending terraces. The site is warm during the day but cool at night, resulting in good ripening while retaining the grape's natural acids. The variety from which this wine is made is an old, low cropping, clone that is prone to having a mixture of small and large berries on the same bunch. It typically produces chardonnay with good concentration and depth.

HARVEST AND WINE MAKING

We use traditional Burgundian winemaking methods. The fruit was picked in stages during April and then gently pressed. The non-clarified juice was put on to large French oak barrels (puncheons), 70% of which were old in order to limit pickup of oak flavour. In these it underwent primary fermentation by the grapes indigenous yeasts. The wine was then matured in the puncheons on its natural yeast deposit (sur lie). In the summer after harvest it started to go through spontaneous secondary (malolactic) fermentation. It was regularly tasted during this time and the fermentation was stopped when the ideal balance was obtained. A further period of maturation preceded bottling.

THE WINE

On release it has a pale lemon colour. The generous aromas and flavours evoke impressions of citrus fruits, nectarines and yellow plums intertwined with savoury elements that suggest barbecued sweet corn, grilled mushrooms and buttered toast. The wine is rich and mouth filling but has a spine of tingling acidity and minerality that keep it tight knit and focused. It has a lingering, tangy aftertaste. With careful cellaring, it can be expected to develop a range of other nuances over the next 5-6 years and live for a decade or more.

Wine in moderation is a natural health food.

