



# Pegasus Bay Estate

## Chardonnay

### 2020

#### THE FAMILY

The Donaldson Family have been seriously involved in viticulture and winemaking for over 40 years. Founder Ivan Donaldson planted one of Canterbury's first vineyards 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 involved.

#### THE VINEYARD AND THE VINES

The vineyard is located within the Waipara Valley of North Canterbury, on free draining, north facing terraces. 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. They are located on the "Glasnevin Gravels" where greywacke stones, silt and loam have been washed down from the mountains over the millennia. The soil is 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.

#### THE SEASON

Settled weather over flowering provided a healthy fruit set, which was then thinned back to desired levels. The ensuing summer was dry with very little rain, resulting in perfectly ripened small berries full of intense flavour and concentration. Thankfully, our harvest was able to proceed during the Covid-19 lockdown, and an unbroken autumn full of warm days meant the fruit was picked at its optimum ripeness.

#### HARVEST AND WINE MAKING

We use traditional Burgundian winemaking methods. The fruit was hand-picked in stages during late March and early April, and then gently trodden underfoot to increase complexity and phenolic structure. The free-run, non-clarified juice was then put into large French oak barrels (puncheons), 70% of which were old 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 deposits of yeast lees (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. It had approximately 12 months maturation prior to bottling.

#### THE WINE

On release the colour is bright lemon. A rich tapestry of aromas rises to satiate the nose, rock melon, nectarine, and mandarin spray at the fore, interwoven with hints of buttered popcorn, flinty gun smoke, vanilla pod, and a whisper of vegemite. The palate is full bodied yet precise, with a creamy textured mouthfeel balanced by a shaft of invigorating acidity that gives focus and drive. Elegant with underlying power and structure, building towards a long, beguiling close.



HARVEST DATE	AVE. BRIX AT HARVEST	ALCOHOL CONTENT	R.S	T.A.	AGING POTENTIAL
16th - 29th March 2020	24	13%	Dry	6.4 g/l	8 - 10 years