

CHURTON THE ABYSS PINOT NOIR 2017

Vintage | 2017

Wine maker | Sam & Ben Weaver

Alcohol | 12.8% Residual sugar | <1 g/l

pH | 3.51 TA | 5.4

Cellaring | up to 15 years

Food match | Slow cooked wild pork fed on Churton Viognier grapes

Churton



VINEYARD | Our distinctive hillside vineyard above the Waihopai Valley was planted in 2000 with a European approach, close vine spacing and high density (approx. 5,000/ha). Churton is managed according to principles of biodynamics and organics. Backing onto a precipitous cliff, The Abyss is our highest block and home to our oldest vines. Its east sloping exposure welcomes the morning sun, ripening fruit slowly and without the harsh intensity of the hot afternoon sun. The 2017 growing season was long and cool, leading to a later harvest than normal but giving the fruit time to develop further depth and dimension. Our Abyss block was picked on the 1st and 3rd of April, a root day and a flower day respectively, with a yield of just 33hl/ha.

WINEMAKING | Our hand-picked fruit was gently de-stemmed and fed by gravity into open top fermenters. The resulting must had a very high proportion of whole berries and the indigenous ferment took 7-10 days to commence. During fermentation we plunged gently twice a day. The wine stayed on skins post ferment with a total maceration time of one lunar month, the portion picked on a flower day being pressed on the equivalent flower day 29 days later. Our 2017 Abyss was aged in French oak barrels, only 10% new, for 18 months. Malolactic fermentation occurred naturally and the following Autumn our wine was racked once and returned to barrel. It was bottled without filtration on 19th September 2018.

TASTING NOTE | Our 2017 The Abyss Pinot Noir has an amazingly aromatic and floral nose. Complex musk rose and chamomile fragrances give way to soft red fruit, a hint of spice and earth tones. In the mouth it is soft and sinuous, with a lightness of touch that belies its depth and complexity. Silky mouth-coating tannins temper the long fruit driven finish. This wine is the quintessential iron fist in a velvet glove.

