

## CHURTON MARLBOROUGH VIOGNIER 2016

Vintage | 2016

Wine makers | Sam Weaver, Ben Weaver

Alcohol | 14.0% Residual sugar | 3.6 g/l pH | 3.35 TA | 5.4

Cellaring | 5+ years Bottles produced | 3227

Food match | An ideal companion to Cantonese Char Sui marinated chicken – or Pad Thai curry with lemon grass and ginger

**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). We manage the vineyard according to principles of biodynamics and organics. On a warm north-east facing incline, our Blade Block is planted with less than one hectare of Viognier. This is the most sheltered part of the vineyard and our Viognier basks in its warmth. 2016 was not a straightforward season but our Viognier excelled, looking spritely and alert through the abundant warm days. The bright and sunny early growing season produced exceptional fruit bunches with slightly lower acidity than normal. The yield was only 4.8T/ha (31hl/ha) but with impressive flavour intensity. Fruit was harvested on 14th April at 22.8 Brix, 6.21 TA and a pH of 3.32.

**WINEMAKING** | Our hand-picked fruit was whole bunch pressed and settled for 24 hours before being racked to French oak demi muids. These 'large format' 600 litre barrels are our preferred fermenting vessel for Viognier as the juice goes in somewhat turbid and this, combined with the oxygen up take during a slow ferment, allows the classic aromatics to be fully expressed. Our 2016 Viognier was aged on yeast lees for 11 months prior to being racked to tank. To retain natural acidity and freshness, our Viognier was not cold stabilised but rather rested in tank before a light filtration and bottling in March 2017.

**TASTING NOTE** | Our 2016 Viognier has a complex aroma, combining winter florals and ripe apricots with savoury notes of sandalwood. The full palate has a soft and creamy texture rich with apricot, spice and a touch of vanilla bean. It is bright throughout with natural acidity and finishes with fresh navel orange citrus and fine length. Adding to the scarceness of our small production Viognier, following this exciting vintage we were unable to produce a 2017 or 2018 Viognier due to seasonal variations.

*Churton*

