



# MT DIFFICULTY SAUVIGNON BLANC 2011

Proper care at all times in the vineyard and winery was the making of vintage 2011. Conditions were difficult but the quality of fruit was very good, provided the right decisions were made.

Spring was fantastically settled, which led to excellent flowering and fruit set. Usual spring conditions actually arrived late, and unsettled weather was the norm right through January and February! Despite this, it was also pretty warm; it was almost too perfect for canopy and bunch development leading to bigger than normal berries, and higher bunch weights as a result. Finally some semblance of normality arrived in March with conditions settling. These conditions continued through autumn, other than one wet spell which highlighted how tender and thin-skinned the berries were this season. In the winery it was a season where the fruit needed empathy, and the direction of the wine was dictated by the fruit.

## VINEYARD:

The grapes for the wines that carry the Mt Difficulty label are subject to two strict criteria: they are managed under the umbrella of the Mt Difficulty viticultural team and must be sourced from vineyards situated in a very specific area - the South side of the Kawarau River at Bannockburn. Mt Difficulty has only one planting of Sauvignon Blanc which fulfils these criteria, on Templars Hill alongside the winery. This area of Mt Difficulty has undergone enormous transformations prior to ever becoming a vineyard. It was formed from the gravels washed down during mining operations, and the gravels thus deposited were then largely carted away and used for road metal on many local roads. The soils across the vineyard are a mixture of heavy Scotland Point clay soils alternating with the drought-prone coarse gravel Bannockburn soils (classified as man-made due to the sluice mining). This vineyard is by far the most difficult to manage from an irrigation perspective of all the Mt Difficulty vineyards.

## WINEMAKING CONSIDERATIONS:

This wine comes from our Templars Hill Vineyard in Bannockburn. The fruit was hand harvested on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of April in excellent condition. We harvested slightly earlier than the past couple of seasons due to the warmth of the season and our desire to lock in a riper spectrum of flavours. The fruit was reductively handled during processing, then gently pressed and racked clean. The wine fermented cold in stainless steel and remained on gross lees for four months post ferment whilst being stirred weekly. These practices were employed to not only retain the maximum varietal fruit character of Sauvignon Blanc but also to develop complexity, palate weight and texture.

## TASTING NOTES:

An ideal warm dry autumn has resulted in aromatics of passionfruit and melon with background notes of dried hay. These aromas are replicated as flavours on entry into the palate, moving into a full textured rich mid-palate and finishing with lingering minerality. This wine is ideal for sensible summer evening drinking.

## CELLARING POTENTIAL:

Mt Difficulty Sauvignon Blanc will improve for 3-5 years given optimal cellaring conditions.

**ALCOHOL:** 13.5%

**PH:** 3.1

**T/ACIDITY:** 8gL<sup>-1</sup>

**RESIDUAL SUGAR:** 2.6gL<sup>-1</sup>