



MT DIFFICULTY

DRY RIESLING 2013

The growing season in 2013 kicked off with a cool spring. Frosts in early November reduced production from Station Block, at the top of the Cromwell basin, but Bannockburn was untouched. Although the cool spring continued after that, temperatures warmed just before Christmas in time to make for a very successful flowering. January was cooler and wetter than average and then February onwards was very warm and dry. We experienced a protracted veraison (the point at which the grapes stop growing and start to ripen, characterised by colour change) leading to increased variability in ripeness. To counter this we introduced a late colour thin to ensure fruit arrived in optimal condition at harvest. Early autumn returned to more classic settled Central autumnal conditions, and harvest started on the 3rd of April, continuing through until the 3rd of May. It was a normal yielding year, with nice focused acidity and interesting flavour profiles reflecting, to some degree, the variability of the season.

VINEYARDS:

The grapes for the wines that carry the Mt Difficulty Bannockburn Estate 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 Riesling planted in Long Gully and Target Gully Vineyards, and the Dry Riesling is produced solely from Long Gully fruit. Long Gully consists of Lochar soils which are formed in older fans. They have very weakly developed, thin and wavy clay pans which are deep enough to cause no impediment to roots or drainage. These are well-drained, high pH soils ideally suited to viticulture. They generally have a 30cm depth of top soil over fine to moderately coarse gravels.

WINEMAKING CONSIDERATIONS:

The Dry Riesling attempts to balance flavour and palate weight with the wine's natural acidity. We really tried to ripen the 2013 Dry Riesling on the vine and didn't harvest till 18th April. It was carefully hand-harvested and processed through the winery – the wine was fermented on full solids to help enhance palate weight. The wine was fermented cool in stainless steel using indigenous yeast to retain maximum varietal expression. The wine was fermented slowly to dryness, and then rested on its gross yeast lees. We shied away from lees stirring this year; trying to build texture but not flavour. The wine stayed on gross lees for eight months, and was then filtered and stabilised for bottling in December.

TASTING NOTES:

Minerally wet stone, lemon zest and honeysuckle dominate the aroma of this Riesling. Pithy lemon zest and elderflower notes introduce the wine onto the palate; there is a plushness in the mid-palate that defies the linear minerally acidity. Finishes on a nice zesty note! The wine is bone dry with less than two grams of residual sugar.

CELLARING POTENTIAL:

Mt Difficulty Dry Riesling will improve for 6 to 8 years given optimal cellaring conditions.

ALCOHOL: 13.2%

PH: 2.9

T/ACIDITY: 7.4g/L⁻¹

RESIDUAL SUGAR: 1.3g/L⁻¹