



MT DIFFICULTY GROWERS SERIES PACKSPUR PINOT NOIR 2015

The growing season in 2015 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.

VINEYARD:

The Growers Series is a recent addition to the Mt Difficulty portfolio, allowing us to showcase the terroir of different sub-regions. Packspur Vineyard is situated on Heany Road in Lowburn, on the northern side of Cromwell (as opposed to Bannockburn to the South). The vineyard takes its name from the track that was used to pack supplies over the Pisa Range, from the Lowburn Valley to the gold-fields of the Cardrona Valley. Packspur Vineyard was planted from locally sourced cuttings by Anne and Laurie McAuley in 1993. The vineyard comprises 3 hectares of north facing Pinot Noir (clones 5, 6, 115 and Lincoln Mix), Pinot Gris, Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay. The grapes are close-planted on a mottled shallow mix of Waenga and Fraser sandy loam soils. The vineyard escapes the worst of winds and the slopes typically ensure a minimal frost risk.

WINEMAKING CONSIDERATIONS:

We harvested the Pinot Noir on the 18th April; in total 3.9 Tonnes of fruit was harvested. All of the different clones were fermented together, to try and enhance early integration. The majority of the fruit was destemmed, with 10% retained as whole clusters to help build structural intensity and help reflect the unique characteristics of the site. The wine underwent a 8 day cold soak and was hand plunged once daily; this was followed by a 9 day natural fermentation with temperature peaking at 30°C during which time the ferment was plunged twice daily. The wine stayed on skins for 24 days in total prior to pressing, overnight settling and then to barrel for 16 months. It then went through malolactic fermentation in the spring, was racked to tank the following winter and bottled, unfinned, in December.

TASTING NOTES:

Aromatically this wine leads with soft, velvety, brambly wild raspberry with lovely soft violet and wildflower florals. Broad open supple, textural raspberry notes lead into a soft broad flow through the palate. Finally, the wine finishes with a herb influence running alongside elegant structural elements.

CELLARING POTENTIAL:

Mt Difficulty Packspur Pinot Noir will improve for 8 -12 years given optimal cellaring conditions.

ALCOHOL: 13.5%

PH: 3.79

T/ACIDITY: 4.9gL⁻¹

RESIDUAL SUGAR: < 1gL⁻¹

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