



MT DIFFICULTY SAUVIGNON BLANC 2009

2009 was a vintage with excellent flavour definition – intense cool varietal flavours were evident in all the wines, with excellent concentration and typically high acidity providing lovely focus on the finish.

A cooler vintage; the volume of the 2009 harvest was down 15% on average. Climatically there was a good start to the season, but December was slightly wetter than usual which impacted negatively on bunch numbers. A typically turbulent January was followed by a cooler and wet February which slowed down vine growth. Good canopy management was essential, with canopies left as open as possible to minimise the detrimental effects of the weather. Central Otago provided its usual long, fine, warm autumn but a week into vintage a very cold spell brought on a cold response in our vines. This hurried the ripening process considerably, shortening and intensifying the season.

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 14th of April in excellent condition. We harvested slightly later than the past couple of seasons due to the coolness of the season and also 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 cool dry autumn has resulted in ripe melon with an undercurrent of capsicum and mineral in the aromas. These aromas are replicated as flavours on the front palate, moving into a full rich mid-palate and then finish 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:	14%	PH:	3.25
T/ACIDITY:	7.7g/L ⁻¹	RESIDUAL SUGAR:	<2g/L ⁻¹