



MT DIFFICULTY SAUVIGNON BLANC 2012

After the ideal dry winter and a cool wet early spring, the only significant blemish on the 2012 vintage was the advection frost that hit our higher elevation Lowburn blocks in early November and dramatically impacted their crop levels. However, the season from that point on was nigh on a perfect cool season. Later in summer is traditionally our warmest period, but this year the extreme heat happened through Christmas and January, and then the weather cooled to merely 'pleasantly warm'. It was dry for the most part; interspersed with short rain events happening at times where the moisture posed little threat. Early autumn was not looking auspicious with cooler temperatures and more rainfall than normal when a fantastic Indian summer finished the season off beautifully. Harvest came in two weeks later than usual due to the cooler overall temperatures, which brought a focused flavour profile with good natural acidity levels. It was a normal yielding year, and we have some very interesting wines in the cellar.

VINEYARD:

The grapes for the wines that carry the Mt Difficulty Bannockburn Estate label are subject to two strict criteria: they are managed by our viticultural team and must be sourced from Bannockburn vineyards - the south side of the Kawarau River in the southern Cromwell basin. Mt Difficulty has two plantings of Sauvignon Blanc which fulfil these criteria; on Templars Hill and Mansons Farm. Templars Hill soils vary across the vineyard from a mixture of heavy Scotland Point clay soils to drought-prone coarse gravel Bannockburn soils (classified as man-made due to the sluice mining). Mansons Farm has a small area of Bannockburn soil but is mostly comprised of Lochar Soils, which are ideally suited to viticulture.

WINEMAKING CONSIDERATIONS:

The Sauvignon Blanc grapes were hand harvested on the 16th and 20th of April in excellent condition. We harvested slightly later than the past couple of seasons due to the coolness of the season and our desire to lock in a riper spectrum of flavours. The Mansons Farm fruit was pressed directly to barrel, where it fermented to dryness then stayed on gross lees being stirred for four months prior to blending with the Templars Hill wine. The fruit from Templars Hill 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:

A cool season has resulted in aromatics of pungent passionfruit with gooseberry and cut 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: 14.5%

PH: 3.2

T/ACIDITY: 7.6g/L⁻¹

RESIDUAL SUGAR: < 1g/L⁻¹