



MARLBOROUGH
NEW ZEALAND

2014 Marlborough Chardonnay Tasting Notes

VINTAGE CONDITIONS

Marlborough's Wairau Valley, at the top of New Zealand's South Island, is one of the world's premier cool climate viticultural regions. The area has relatively young riverbed soils that are generally stony, well drained and silty, though significant variation does occur. Marlborough's growing season is generally characterised by warm, sunny days and cool nights resulting in fruit with good natural acidity and clean, fresh flavours. 2014 was in some ways a challenging growing season. The winter of 2013 was the warmest on record in NZ, leading to an early bud burst. Wet conditions in spring increased vigour in the vineyard, and overall crops were set at above average yields, meaning that fruit thinning was required, extensive in some cases. Cooler conditions during the later stages of the season pushed out harvest dates to be later than had been anticipated. Overall, our Chardonnay crops can be described as moderate to low. Grapes retained a good level of ripe, natural acidity, with a mix of typical Marlborough stone fruit and citrus flavours, depending on clone and site.

HARVEST DATE

14th March – 7th April 2014

WINEMAKING

Fruit for 2014 Framingham Marlborough Chardonnay was sourced from four different sites in the Wairau valley. The finished wine comprises base wines made from clones 95 (65%) and 15 (35%). Juices were fermented in both tank and new and seasoned French oak barriques and puncheons (overall, the wine has a 60% barrel ferment component). Once fermentation was complete, malolactic fermentation took place in some containers; both to soften acidity and add complexity. At the same time, batonnage (lees stirring) was carried out periodically, providing good mouthfeel and some additional interest. Wines in barrel were matured for 10 months, and then blended with the fruit driven tank-fermented component, which was aged on lees without stirring. The resultant blend was gently clarified and bottled under screwcap to preserve freshness, flavour and integrity.

ANALYSIS

Alcohol: 14.0% vol

Total Acid: 6.0 g/l

pH: 3.35

COLOUR

Pale straw with green highlights.

BOUQUET

Subtle aromatics with nectarine and melon fruit, hints of yoghurt and oatmeal, and a wisp of smoke.

PALATE

Rich palate with nicely integrated layers of fruit and "winemaker influence". Fruit flavours are quite typical of Marlborough; ripe nectarine, peach and citrus, and these are supported by a touch of oak, plenty of creamy mlf derived notes, and some oatmeal-like, batonnage derived characters. The finish has fine acid and good length, with nicely rounded mouthfeel.

ASSESSMENT

The Chardonnay variety is a well-established favourite amongst the world's wine drinkers. Marlborough's combination of soil and cool climate provides distinctive Chardonnay flavours which develop slowly during the growing season, and a good acid backbone. Framingham Chardonnay aims to compliment these fruit flavours with well integrated "winemaker intervention" notes to give an elegant wine with a good balance of flavours and lovely texture. Immediately approachable, the wine should continue to soften and gain complexity over the next 5-6 years.
