



MARLBOROUGH
NEW ZEALAND

2013 Marlborough Noble Riesling Tasting Notes

VINTAGE CONDITIONS

Marlborough, 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. Vintage 2013 has been touted by others to be a uniformly excellent one over the whole of NZ. Time will tell whether this is true or not. Heat summation data for Marlborough showed the 2012-13 growing season to quite close to the long term average. Weather at flowering for Riesling was generally good; however, as a legacy of the previous very cool season, overall crops can be described as moderate. The season felt like a warm one, and rainfall was low over a compressed harvest period. With the onset of morning dews as nights cooled towards the end of the table wine picking season, conditions for botrytis to flare in already ripe fruit were good. Our "Auslese" picking period was quite short; only 4 weeks or so. Select harvests were made of bunches with degrees of botrytis influence ranging from 10 to 100%.

HARVEST DATE

15th April – 16th May 2013

WINEMAKING

A significant amount of work is done in the vineyards that produce grapes for all of Framingham's Rieslings. Crop thinning and a degree of leaf plucking are practised (depending on prevalent conditions), giving low yields of grapes that have had managed exposure to sunlight. Several areas of Riesling grapes were left out on each of our 3 estate Riesling blocks, after harvesting for the table wines had been completed, to allow development of botrytis; a fungus that concentrates sugars in the fruit by dehydration and imparts distinctive flavours. Whole bunches with varying degrees of botrytis infection, many incorporating clean fruit as well, were hand-picked, and a sugar-rich nectar coaxed from them in the winery over a period of a few days. Resultant juices were clarified by cool settling for several days, before racking to ferment. Ferments were conducted in old barriques, stainless barrels, 50L beer kegs and 23L glass jars, and were stopped when the sugar/acid/alcohol balance was judged to be about right. The appropriate components (nine in total) were then blended, clarified and bottled under screw cap to preserve freshness, flavour and integrity.

ANALYSIS

Alcohol: 9.5% vol

Total Acid: 10.3 g/l

pH: 3.17

COLOUR

Bright, brassy gold.

BOUQUET

Complex aromatics showing significant, but not complete, botrytis influence. Nice mix of stone fruit, honey and pithy marmalade-like citrus, with hints of "gin and tonic".

PALATE

Palate is tight, but has richness and viscosity. Lots of liquid marmalade type flavours, grapefruit citrus and apricot with hints of mango and other tropical fruits. Fresh, juicy acidity keeps it all honest and prevents any sense of cloying.

ASSESSMENT

Framingham Noble Riesling is made in somewhat small quantities. Vintage 2013 can be compared to a Beereauslese style rather than the more usual Auslese Gold Kapsule style; a function of the relatively high botrytis levels we were presented with. The wine has a good balance of flavours (botrytis being more prominent but with some "clean" fruit notes too) which are immediately appealing; however the wine's acid structure should keep it fresh, allowing complexity to develop over the next three years or more. A versatile wine on the table, it can be drunk between courses in place of a sorbet to refresh the palate, or provide an excellent accompaniment to cheeses and rich desserts.