



MARLBOROUGH  
NEW ZEALAND

## 2015 Marlborough Noble Riesling Tasting Notes

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### 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. Winter and Spring of 2014 was somewhat drier than normal, and poor weather at flowering meant that low crop yields were set. The run up to harvest felt quite warm, raising questions as to whether good acid structure would be retained in Riesling grapes, however in the end these concerns were unfounded. Weather was generally favourable over harvest, however morning dews allowed botrytis to flare in already ripe fruit that was almost ready for picking. As "dry" botrytis is required for "noble" styles and "wet" botrytis is undesirable for table wines, selective hand-harvesting was absolutely essential for both table wine and sweet styles of Riesling. Our "Auslese" picking period was again quite short, but intensive; only 3 weeks or so. This is a single estate wine made from vines that are 34 years old.

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### HARVEST DATE

22<sup>nd</sup> April – 4<sup>th</sup> May 2015

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### 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. Nine "auslese" components were pressed in 2015. Whole bunches with varying degrees of botrytis infection (25-100%), 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 under varying regimes, in old barriques, stainless barrels and 50L beer kegs, and were stopped when the sugar/acid/alcohol balance was judged to be about right. The appropriate components (ten in total, net brix 34° (149 Öchsle)) were then blended, clarified and bottled under screw cap to preserve freshness, flavour and integrity.

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### ANALYSIS

*Alcohol:* 9.5% vol

*Total Acid:* 9.2 g/l

*pH:* 3.05

### COLOUR

Bright, brassy gold.

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### BOUQUET

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

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### PALATE

Palate is tight, but has real richness and viscosity. Lots of liquid marmalade type flavours, vibrant grapefruit citrus and apricot with hints of red fruits, mango and other tropical fruits; "pure" botrytis flavours. Fine, juicy acidity keeps it all honest and prevents any sense of cloying.

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### ASSESSMENT

Framingham Noble Riesling is made in somewhat small quantities. Vintage 2015 can be compared to a Beerenauslese 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.