



SINGLE VINEYARD TUKI TUKI

CHURCH ROAD 1 CHARDONNAY 2022

WINEMAKERS

Chris Scott, Craig Thomas

VITICULTURISTS

Graham Bartleet, Claire Pinker

“Terroir is a French word with no direct English translation. It can be described as the flavour of the place. The same grape variety grown in different sites, even in the same region, will demonstrate a unique character related to those individual sites. Differences in soil, slope, altitude, and shelter can subtly or dramatically alter the resulting wine, even over distances of a few metres. The very best sites growing well suited varieties, will produce wines that stand out amongst their peers. Wines of recognisable personality, presence, and above all, quality. Church Road 1 is a range of single vineyard wines that showcase the terroir of our best vineyards.”

Chris Scott, Chief Winemaker

VINEYARD

Tuki Tuki Vineyard:

This vineyard was planted by Tom McDonald in the 1960's and is situated roughly 4 Km from the sea on the eastern bank of the Tuki Tuki River. The site has a gently sloping western aspect running down towards the river. Elevated slightly above the surrounding plains, the vineyard is exposed to both cooling afternoon sea breezes and southerly winds which delay ripening and help to retain fragrance and fresh acidity, ideal for Chardonnay. The topsoil is a dense clay over a calcareous clay pan that has resulted from limestone outwash from the Tuki Tuki Valley. The capillary action of this clay soil holds onto water tightly in the drier summer months, making it hard for the vine to access, while the clay pan restricts root growth. Therefore, vine vigour is generally well controlled, and crops are naturally very modest. The limestone influence brings a mineral element to the Chardonnay that we do not see to the same degree from other sites.

VITICULTURE

2022 was a challenging season in Hawke's Bay, requiring careful vineyard management and meticulous fruit selection to achieve high quality results. Another exceptionally warm season, 11% above the long-term average, 2022 was also wetter and more humid than normal. Our viticulturists responded with an emphasis on canopy management and crop load, making sure the fruit was well exposed, with no clumping or crowding. This maximised aeration and ensured the fruit dried quickly after rain events, minimising the disease risk. Harvest began unusually early in the middle of February, and the Chardonnay blocks timed a bit of a window in the weather, allowing us to get a good volume of hand harvested and hand sorted fruit off the vines in very good condition. These conditions have delivered elegant balanced wines with ripe flavour and gentle texture at pleasingly moderate alcohol levels. The vines were trained to 2 cane VSP. We employed extensive shoot and fruit thinning where required, along with bunch positioning, de-clumping, close canopy trimming and, this year, extensive removal of leaf through the fruit zone.

Clones: 15 (97.5%), 95 (2.5%)

WINEMAKING

All fruit was hand-harvested and gently whole bunch pressed and filled to French oak barriques without any juice clarification or additions. Only the first portion of free run juice was used. Wild primary and malolactic fermentation ensued, and have delivered an extra degree of complexity, textural interest and provided an excellent natural acid balance. Oak use was reasonably restrained this year (27% new), to avoid dominating the elegant nature of the vintage, and allowing the terroir of the vineyard to be expressed. The wine was matured on full yeast lees in barrel approximately 11 months with only occasional yeast lees stirring. The blend was then brought out to tank for a further 4 months of light lees aging. To avoid any unnecessary stripping effect, the wine was unfinned and only lightly filtered for clarity prior to bottling.

WINE

A fuller bodied Chardonnay balanced by gentle, fresh acidity, savoury umami-like complexity and flinty minerality giving the wine a long, lithe finish. The Tuki Tuki Vineyard has typically delivered a vibrant fruit spectrum with an amalgam citrus / citrus blossom, acacia flower and a richer undertone of subtle ripe peach while wild fermentation and lees aging in barrel has overlaid elements of roasted nuts and toasted brioche. Still youthful and taught, with careful cellaring we expect this wine to continue to mature gracefully for 6 years or more from vintage date. With age, the wine will develop more complex, savoury nuttiness and will gain breadth and richness on the palate.

Alc 13.5% v/v | **TA** 6.38g/L | **pH** 3.26 | **RS** 2.3g/L