



# GRAND RESERVE

## SYRAH 2021

### WINEMAKERS

*Chris Scott, Craig Thomas*

### VITICULTURISTS

*Graham Bartleet, Claire Pinker*

*“Syrah is fast becoming a key variety for Hawke’s Bay and New Zealand, producing distinctive, complex and aromatic wines of exceptional quality that are achieving international acclaim. At the 2018 Global Syrah Masters, Hawke’s Bay was identified as one of the top 4 Syrah regions in the world. This is a fragrant, fine-textured example that exudes berry fruit, lifted floral and spice aromas, and a powerful palate structure that will reward cellaring.”*

**Chris Scott, Chief Winemaker**

### VINEYARD

**Wai-iti Vineyard (59%):** Located in the Bridge Pa Triangle winegrowing district, and to the south of the Redstone Vineyard (see below). Unlike Redstone, Wai-iti loses the lee of Roy’s Hill, making it more exposed to cold air draining down the valley out of the western ranges. It is therefore a slightly later ripening site, but excels in a good year, producing wines with exceptional fragrance and finesse. (See Redstone Vineyard below for Bridge Pa Triangle soil type).

**The Gimblett Vineyards (28%):** Very free draining alluvial gravels, this soil type is some of the lowest vigour, lowest nutrient soil in Hawke’s Bay, restricting vine growth and water uptake and resulting in meagre crops of intensely flavoured fruit. The area is only 30 M above sea level, and far enough inland to be relatively well protected from the sea breeze, while the gravel soils store the heat of the day, helping to make this one of the warmest areas in the region ideally suited to red winegrowing. This vineyard tends to produce wines with a core of dark fruit and a firm tannin structure that brings length and drive to the blend.

**Redstone Vineyard (12%):** Situated in the Bridge Pa Triangle Winegrowing District, Redstone is approximately 40m above sea level, far enough inland to be sheltered from the sea breeze and in the lee of Roy’s Hill which protects the site from cold air draining out of the mountains to the west. This makes Redstone one of the warmest vineyards in Hawke’s Bay, perfect for the cultivation of later ripening varieties. The soils here are known as red metals, formed by a 10,000 year old, free draining, alluvial greywacke gravel riverbed since covered by a shallow layer of wind-blown loess and iron rich volcanic ash that is responsible for the distinctive rust coloured staining of the stones. This site typically produces ripe, supple and very aromatic wine with an amalgam of red and black fruit, lifted floral fragrance and an iron like minerality.

### VITICULTURE

2021 was another exceptional year in Hawke’s Bay, with warm, dry, settled weather over most of the season. A significant sustained drought period lasted from mid-summer through until well after harvest was completed, allowing for all fruit to be harvested in optimum condition. A little cooler than 2020, the vintage is characterised by exuberant aromatics and excellent structure, which should see some very long-lived wines.

The vines were trained to 2 cane VSP and we employed extensive shoot and fruit thinning, along with bunch positioning, de-clumping, shoulder removal, close canopy trimming and 100% removal of leaf through the fruit zone, to

ensure a balanced, evenly spaced and well exposed crop. Soil moisture was monitored regularly to regulate a deficit drip irrigation programme. This kept the vines in a functioning yet low vigour state that promoted both ripening and concentration. Approaching harvest time, we visited the blocks every 2 or 3 days, tasting, evaluating flavour and ripeness and checking for condition to ensure we picked at the ideal moment; our aim was to achieve a balance between density, power, freshness and precision in the resulting wines.

**Predominant Clones: Mass Selection (60%), Chave (15%), 470 (13%), Other (12%)**

### WINEMAKING

Most of the fruit was selectively harvested across an automated sorting table to remove any green material before being crushed to fermenters. Fermentation was allowed to peak at 34 deg C ensuring good extraction of colour and ripe tannin. The wines were allowed to undergo post fermentation maceration for a total time on skins of between 2 to 3 weeks. This maceration period brought greater richness and texture to the palate and helped to integrate and balance the tannins. This was further aided by regular aeration, which also stabilised colour and opened up fruit aromatics, downplaying leafier herbal notes and allowing the aromatic floral and spice notes to shine. We tasted daily to determine the amount of aeration and to determine the optimum time to drain and press. The component wines were then filled to 228 L French oak barriques (33% new) and the balance older French and Hungarian origin. Malolactic fermentation ensued, softening the acidity and the wines were matured on light lees, in barrel for a total of 16 months to build texture and develop harmony. The individual components were carefully racked to the final blend for clarity and to avoid any unnecessary stripping effect, this was bottled without any subsequent fining or filtration.

### WINE

Aromas of vibrant red and black berry fruit and dark plummy richness are lifted by a classic Hawke’s Bay Syrah floral perfume and exotic warm spice and pepper notes, while complexities of liquorice, cacao, vanilla, savoury undertones and an iron-like minerality bring a serious depth to the wine. On the palate the wine is medium bodied with an impression of sweet fruit and a long, elegant finish driven by fine grained tannins and gentle acidity. Well matched to a wide range of full flavoured game and red meat dishes.

**Alc 13.5% v/v | TA 6g/L | pH 3.58 | RS 2g/L**