



Pegasus Bay Reserve

BEL CANTO

Dry Riesling 2024

THE FAMILY

The Donaldson Family have been seriously involved in viticulture and winemaking for almost 50 years. Founder Ivan Donaldson planted one of Canterbury's first vineyards in 1976 and went on to establish Pegasus Bay in 1986 with his wife Christine. It is a true family business, with the second generation now actively involved.

THE VINEYARD AND THE VINES

The vineyard is located within the Waipara Valley of North Canterbury, on free draining, north facing terraces. It benefits from being in the lee of the Teviotdale Range, giving maximum protection from the Pacific's easterly breezes and thus creating a unique mesoclimate. The vines are over 30 years old, with a large proportion planted on their own roots. They are located on the "Glasnevin Gravels" where greywacke stones, silt and loam have been washed down from the mountains over the millennia. The soil is of low fertility, resulting in naturally reduced vine vigour. This produces low yields of optimally ripened, high quality, flavourful grapes, which fully express the qualities of this unique terroir. The vineyard has warm days, but the nights are amongst the coolest in the Waipara Valley, drawing out the ripening period of the grapes, while still retaining good natural acidity.

THE SEASON

Cooler and windier conditions during Spring meant lower crop levels, keeping fruit thinning to a minimum. The weather gods then handed us the opposite during Summer, with a warm and settled state prevailing, so this smaller crop was able to mature beautifully. Autumn was similarly favourable, allowing each variety to be picked at its optimum ripeness. Our 2024 harvest saw smaller yields across the board, but as a result we were blessed with intense fruit flavour and concentration, delivering some outstanding wines.

HARVEST AND WINE MAKING

With its large diurnal range and long lingering autumns, North Canterbury is an ideal playground for Riesling, and Bel Canto is a perfect example of this. This wine is part of our reserve series, which we only make in exceptional years. After an extended hang time, the bunches were hand selected with a ripeness of approximately 25.5 Brix. The free run juice was then slowly fermented to dryness at cool temperatures to help the wine retain its vibrant fruit characters and varietal purity. At all stages, the wine was handled very carefully to help retain a little of its natural carbon dioxide. This has resulted in a small amount of spritzig, which adds extra liveliness to the wine and accentuates its freshness.

THE WINE

You are greeted by a light gold colour with a shining lime hue. A full and richly scented bouquet rises from the glass, with suggestions of pineapple, quince and oyster shell, spiced with floral notes of citrus blossom and honeysuckle. The concentrated palate displays outstanding weight and a richly textured mouthfeel, perfectly structured by vibrant acidity and a sassy dash of spritzig. Bel Canto 24 is impressively complex and flavoursome, with an expansive, persistent finish.



HARVEST DATE	AVE. BRIX AT HARVEST	ALCOHOL CONTENT	R.S.	T.A.	AGING POTENTIAL
29th April - 8th May 2024	25.5	13.5%	6.7 g/l	5.8 g/l	5 - 7 years