



Pegasus Bay Estate

Pinot Noir

2023

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

Settled weather during Spring resulted in successful flowering and a healthy fruit set, meaning crop thinning was needed in some areas. Good heat concentration in early to mid-Summer then allowed the grapes to ripen beautifully. The remainder of Summer and Autumn threw up a mix of hot days interspersed with cooler spells, although rain was sufficiently spread out to ensure the bunches remained healthy and disease free.

HARVEST AND WINE MAKING

Traditional Burgundian winemaking methods were used to make this wine. We picked the various blocks at different stages, depending on their maturity, aiming for a range of red and dark fruit flavours. Approximately 40% the grapes were put at the bottom of the fermentation vats as whole bunches, with the balance being destemmed on top, retaining as many whole berries as possible. The vats were kept cool over the next few days to help extract the soft, silky tannins from the pinot noir skins. After approximately a week the must started to ferment naturally. During fermentation the skins of the grapes were gently plunged twice daily. When the fermentation finished, the grape remnants were left to steep in the wine for up to a week to help extract a different range of tannins that add structure and depth. The exact duration of this period was determined by daily tasting. Subsequently the wine was gently pressed off and put into oak barriques (30% new) from selected artisan Burgundian coopers. In the summer after harvest, when the weather warmed, the wine underwent a natural malo-lactic (secondary) fermentation. After maturing for 15 months in these barriques, the batches made from the many different plots and clones of pinot were carefully blended in varying portions to produce the most complex and balanced wine possible.

THE WINE

With its rich ruby hue, Pegasus Bay Pinot Noir 2023 presents a delicately fragranced nose, showcasing notes of raspberry, cherry and violet, underlined with hints of dried herbs and subtle mineral reflections of tree moss and river rock. The mouthfeel is bright and full of vitality, balancing savoury red fruit, backed by seamlessly woven tannins, and a core of frisky acidity that canters across the palate, adding clarity and definition. Effortlessly merging both freshness and a sense of refinement, it concludes with a sleek, elegantly structured dismount.

HARVEST DATE	BRIX AT HARVEST	ALCOHOL CONTENT	R.S	T.A.	AGING POTENTIAL
24th March - 6th April 2023	24	13%	dry	4.7 g/l	10+ years

