

Upton Downs Vineyard Pinot Noir

2023



TASTING NOTES

The Upton Downs delivers a Pinot Noir of beguiling poise and perfume, born of high-altitude exposure, a cool dry microclimate and the layered, complex soils of the Upper Awatere.

The bouquet opens with lifted violet and wild red berry aromas threaded with rose petal and subtle forest floor. On the palate it is elegant yet firmly structured, where silky tannins and bright acidity frame concentrated cherry, pomegranate and savoury spice, while careful whole-bunch inclusion add lift and tensile energy. The finish is long, mineral and compelling, promising early pleasure and confident age-worthiness.

2023 VINTAGE

It was a nervy start to the 2023 growing season in Marlborough, with variable conditions at flowering in December leading to lower yields and loose bunches.

This proved to be a critical factor of the success of 2023, as the La Niña conditions meant evenly spread rains throughout late summer and early autumn did not cause disease issues. Cold nights held botrytis at bay and ensured naturally high acidity in the fruit.

An exceptional weather run through March and April was the final stroke of good luck, and the region was rewarded with intense flavours and ripeness levels across the district. We hand harvested the Upton Downs vineyard on the 8th April 2023.

Alcohol: 13%

Total acidity: 5.89 g/L

pH: 3.58

Residual sugar: Nil

Total SO₂: 59 mg/L

UPPER AWATERE TERROIR

The Upper Awatere is comprised of elevated terraces sculpted by dramatic tectonic uplift and iconic white "Papa" cliffs as the valley climbs toward the Kaikōura Ranges.

The cool climate stretches the growing season, allowing slow, even ripening under intense sunlight and crisp mountain air. Shallow silty loams interspersed with sand, gravel and clay over ancient mudstone deliver impeccable drainage and low vine vigor, concentrating flavors and preserving bright acidity. This subregion yields Pinot Noir of remarkable vibrancy - red-fruited perfume, refined minerality and a lively, persistent finish.

UPTON DOWNS VINEYARD

The Turnbull Family established their vineyard in the Awatere Valley from what was an apricot orchard in the early 2000s. They live to get the best out of their land, for the present as well as future generations. They live and work sustainably, with the vineyard also boasting a 0% chemical residue rating.

They firmly believe in 'kaitiakitanga' - a Maori word meaning guardianship - over the land. The vineyard was planted in 2003, and the small parcel entrusted to is exclusively Dijon clone 777. Cane pruned and VSP trained, the vineyard is meticulously managed and benefits from little disease pressure due to the drier, cool climate.



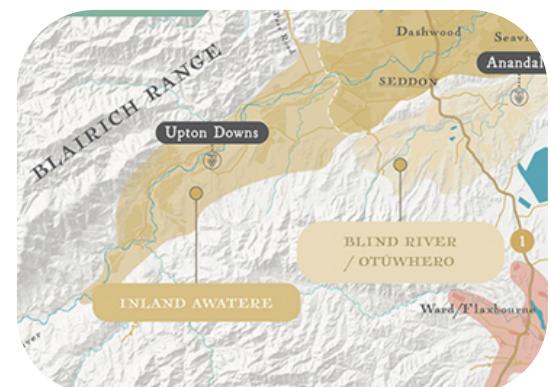
WINEMAKING PHILOSOPHY

We hand-picked our small parcel of the remote Upton Downs Vineyard on Easter Sunday, which was a family affair. Once at the winery we tipped 40% as whole clusters into an open-top fermenter and crushed the balance over the top.

The fruit underwent a 6-day cold soak before naturally kicking off fermentation. Hand-plunging during the 15-day fermentation period was followed by draining the free-run wine and pressing the remaining wine all to French oak barriques (35% new) where it matured for 11 months, undergoing natural malolactic fermentation.

A further 4 months on light lees in small tank allowed the wine to come together, gently settling over time before being bottled without filtration in the winter following harvest.

Vegan.
Appellation Marlborough Wine Certified.



Vineyard: Upton Downs Vineyard

Subregion: Upper Awatere > Awatere

Valley > Marlborough

Soil Type: Uplifted sedimentary loess, clay

Average Vine Age: 20 years

Trellis: Cane pruned VSP

Farming: SWNZ Certified

Altitude: 200 meters

Aspect: East/West rows

Clone: Dijon 777

Harvested: 8th April 2023

Harvest: Hand-picked, hand plunged

Fermentation: Wild, 40% whole cluster fermentation

Vessel: 100% French oak barriques (35% new)

Maturation: 12 months on lees

Finishing: Unfined | Unfiltered

Bottled: 9th July 2024