



Pegasus Bay Estate

Chardonnay

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

We use traditional Burgundian winemaking methods. The fruit was hand-picked in stages during late March and early April, and then gently trodden underfoot to increase complexity and phenolic structure. The free-run, non-clarified juice was then put into large French oak barrels (puncheons), 70% of which were old to limit pickup of oak flavour. In these it underwent primary fermentation by the grapes indigenous yeasts. The wine was then matured in the puncheons on its natural deposits of yeast lees (sur lie). In the summer after harvest, it started to go through spontaneous secondary (malolactic) fermentation. It was regularly tasted during this time and the fermentation was stopped when the ideal balance was obtained. It had approximately 12 months maturation prior to bottling.

THE WINE

In the glass it has an enticing light gold sheen. Immensely complex and seductive, the bouquet shows melon, pineapple and nashi pear, underpinned with toasty barrel spice, crushed thyme and a whiff of gun flint. On the concentrated palate there is outstanding weight and texture, a creamy mouthfeel supported by beautifully judged acidity. Opulent, yet delivered with grace, harmony, and a long refined finish.



HARVEST DATE	AVE. BRIX AT HARVEST	ALCOHOL CONTENT	R.S	T.A.	AGING POTENTIAL
23rd March - 6th April 2023	24	13.5%	Dry	6.7 g/l	8 - 10 years