Pegasus Bay Estate Malbec 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 close to 40 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

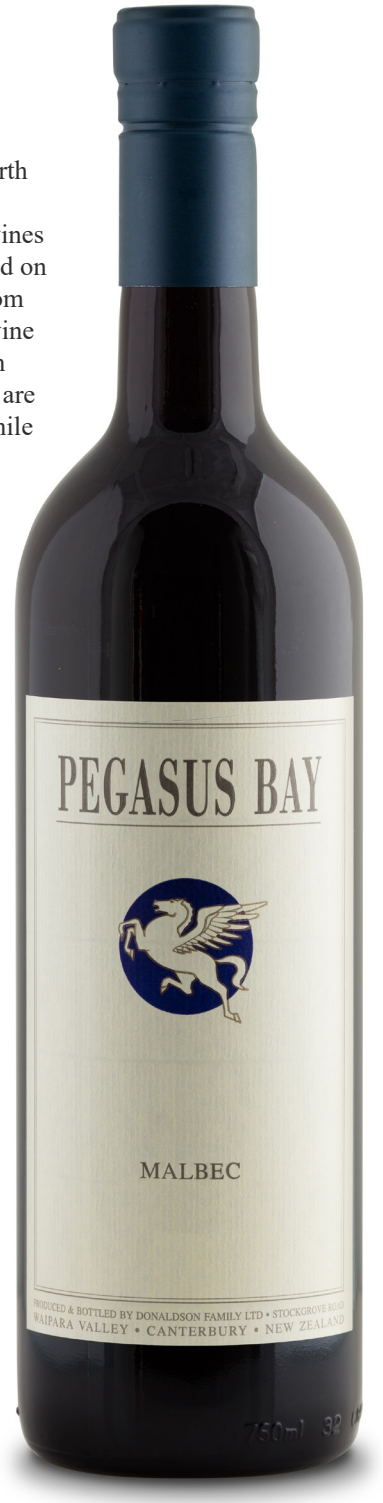
Settled weather during Spring resulted in successful flowering and a healthy fruit set, meaning crop thinning was needed in some areas. Good heat concentration in early to mid-Summer then allowed the grapes to ripen beautifully. The remainder of Summer and Autumn threw up a mix of hot days interspersed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

HARVEST AND WINE MAKING

Malbec is a Bordeaux varietal, and therefore we have used traditional winemaking methods from this region. After being picked in late April, the grapes began fermentation naturally in stainless steel tanks. During this process the juice was regularly pumped over the cap of floating grape skins (rather than plunging), to ensure a perfect tannin balance was extracted from the fruit. The wine was then gently pressed off and put into French oak barriques (40% new). The following summer, when the weather warmed, it underwent a natural malo-lactic (secondary) fermentation. After maturing in oak for 15 months, the wine was then racked several times allowing it to clarify naturally, prior to bottling.

THE WINE

In the glass it is a deep shade of aubergine. Leaping to greet the nose is a volley of dark forest fruit, interwoven with savoury hints of sweet tobacco, black pepper, liquorice and a subtle smoky note. The same flavour profile is etched into the palate, where plush fruit and spice converge on a backbone of velvety tannins and frisky acidity to create a powerful, yet textured mouthfeel. This is a dark toned, full-bodied wine with a healthy dose of brawny swagger, and a lively dismount. Giddy-up!.



HARVEST DATE	BRIX AT HARVEST	ALCOHOL CONTENT	R.S	T.A.	AGING POTENTIAL
23rd April 2023	24	13%	dry	5 g/l	7 - 10 years

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