

Blank Canvas

Blank Canvas Chardonnay 2016

TASTING NOTE Our inaugural Chardonnay is an incredibly textured, savoury wine. It summons a golden peach and grapefruit fruit profile, alongside complex flint and fresh bread notes that are attributed to the wild yeast fermentation it underwent in 500 litre French oak puncheons. Further complexity is bequeathed by the 40% proportion of new oak, imparting subtle vanillin and toast characters. Lifted crisp acidity allows the power and weight of this wine to shine through resulting in a tantalisingly long and balanced finish.

VINTAGE The 2016 vintage had the threat of severe drought hanging over it as El Nino conditions enveloped the start of the growing season through to January. Much needed rain events in mid-January and again in March however replenished the rivers and soil moisture. A higher than average number of growing degree days was experienced meaning the rainfall near the start of the harvest period did not impact the fruit adversely and kept the canopies healthy. Warm Autumn days and cool nights enabled long-hang times which resulted in concentrated, ripe fruit profiles.

VITICULTURE The vineyard is situated in the Omaka Valley on Brookby Road in Marlborough on low-vigour clay soils. It is cane pruned and VSP trained. We selectively hand-harvested a small parcel on 12th April 2016 of 100% Clone 95 Chardonnay, which we love for its elegance and aromatic complexity. The yield was very low which resulted in concentration of flavour and resulting length.

WINEMAKING In a break from tradition we decided not to lees stir our Chardonnay, but we couldn't prevent it being seriously shaken by the 14 November earthquake that struck the region while it rested in the winery. There were vinous casualties but thankfully our Chardonnay survived – thus it is genuinely shaken not stirred. Whole bunch pressed, full solids taken, 100% wild fermentation in French oak puncheons (40% new), with 10 months' maturation; it is very much minimalist winemaking. We were able to guide this wine to bottle without any fining or filtration.

FOOD MATCH We adore the quintessential match of chicken and mushroom casserole, smoked chicken and hazelnut salad, or good old fish and chips for this wine though its versatility means it will pair well with all meats including chicken, pork and fish, particularly with a toasted element.

TECHNICAL ANALYSES

Alcohol	13.5%	pH	3.28
Residual Sugar	Nil	Acidity	5.49

ENDORSEMENTS:
95 Bob Campbell MW
17.5 Julia Harding MW,
JancisRobinson.com
**Top White Wine of
2018** – Tom Cannavan
(UK)

