



FELTON ROAD

2016 Felton Road Chardonnay *Bannockburn*

Tasting Note

Aromas of citrus blossom, crushed stones, white peach and elderflower. The palate is almost completely filled with the characteristic salty minerality. Delicate and fine, not heavy nor complicated with wood or winemaking, it carries a lovely transparency and finesse. There's no shortage of flavour here, but it is ethereal - it dances on the palate, then finishes with great purity and length.

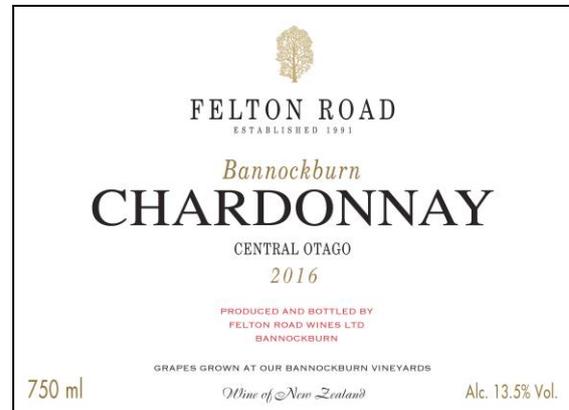
Introduction

Beginning with meticulous site selection and vineyard design started in 1991, Felton Road's story is one of refusal to compromise. A strict 100% estate policy with fully organic and biodynamic viticulture (Demeter certified) ensures that our fruit arrives at the winery as pure as it can be, while our entire estate comes as close to true sustainability as is possible. A commitment to hands off winemaking: gravity flow, wild yeasts, wild malo, an avoidance of fining and filtration all help preserve the wine's expression of its terroir. The result is Riesling, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir which accurately express the authenticity and complexity of our unique vineyards.

Gareth King; Viticulturist, Blair Walter; Winemaker, Nigel Greening; Proprietor.

Vineyard & Viticulture

Felton Road farms four properties totaling 32 ha in the Bannockburn sub-region of Central Otago. Meticulous summer management of a single vertical shoot positioned (VSP) canopy ensures even and early fruit maturity. Shoot thinning, shoot positioning, leaf plucking, bunch thinning and harvest are all carried out by hand to ensure optimum quality fruit. Cover crops are planted between rows to assist in vine balance and to improve soil health and general biodiversity.



Vintage

El Nino conditions provided westerlies and early warmth, which combined with high soil-moisture, pushed an early bud-burst and vibrant growth. Temperatures rose rapidly towards flowering with moisture-wicking wind conditions keeping growth in check. December brought extreme diurnal swings the likes of which we are not accustomed to seeing so early in the season; afternoon highs in the low thirties balanced by single-figures overnight. The diurnal pattern continued through January with a full 30°C swing on January 11th. Overnight temperatures then became warmer than normal with scattered rain events offering some relief for desiccated soils. Veraison was early with a rapid onset but prolonged completion. Peak temperatures dropped away as high diurnals returned, offering a balancing tension and finesse after the welcome but unusual early season warmth. Chardonnay picking began on March 22nd and was completed on April 3.

Vinification

Various clones of Chardonnay (Mendoza, B95, B548, UCD6) were carefully hand harvested in late March and early April from Cornish Point and The Elms vineyards. The grapes were whole bunch pressed with the juice immediately flowing to barrel by gravity with no settling. Fermentation in French oak (mostly well-seasoned barrels) with indigenous yeasts has produced a wine with considerable complexity. A long and complete indigenous malolactic fermentation with only periodic stirring of the lees (Batonnage) combined with 12 months on full lees; has softened the acid for a rich and complex mouthfeel.

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