



FELTON ROAD

2015 Felton Road Chardonnay *Bannockburn*

Tasting Note

White peach, crushed almonds and orange blossom abound on the nose. The palate is creamy and luscious with an underlying and fine-tuned acidic freshness. The finish features a return of the almond characters in this nutty, mineral and distinctive Bannockburn Chardonnay. Complex yet easily understandable and immensely drinkable.

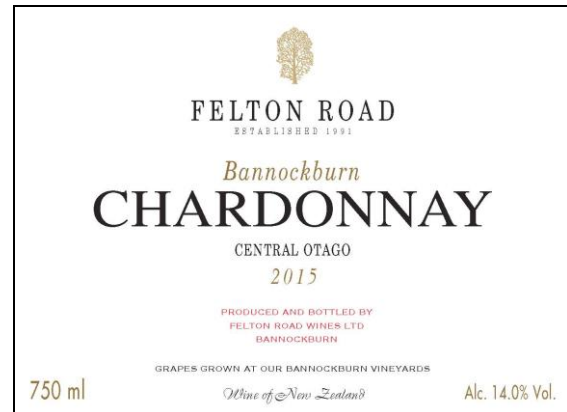
Introduction

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

Cool spring conditions resulted in bud burst a little later than usual and slow early season growth. The weather finally stabilised in time for flowering in mid-December. Low rainfall assisted with soil temperatures finally increasing causing a rapid growth surge. Peak temperatures continued to be high throughout January in the build up to veraison. Bunch compositions were overall of a good size although berry numbers were down in places. Temperatures were relatively moderate through February with warmish nights but more than double the monthly rainfall. Veraison was helped by the early warmth and achieved completion quickly. Vine and leaf condition held very well with no signs of stress or early shut down. Yields were normal with harvest starting on March 27. Chardonnay and Pinot Noir were completed by April 11 after 8 consecutive days of fast picking with fine weather throughout. The last of the Riesling was picked on April 14.

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 (6% new) 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), along with 12 months on full lees; has softened the acid for a rich and complex mouthfeel.

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