



FELTON ROAD

2022 Felton Road Chardonnay *Block 6*

Tasting Note

The more exposed and north facing slope of Block 6 counters its higher elevation, contributing to the ripeness of fruit and bolder expression (compared to the Block 2). The initial impression is tightly woven, but soon expands and opens to reveal intriguing nutty and brioche notes. The breadth and depth are impressive, with a mineral freshness brightening and influencing the seamless and long finish.

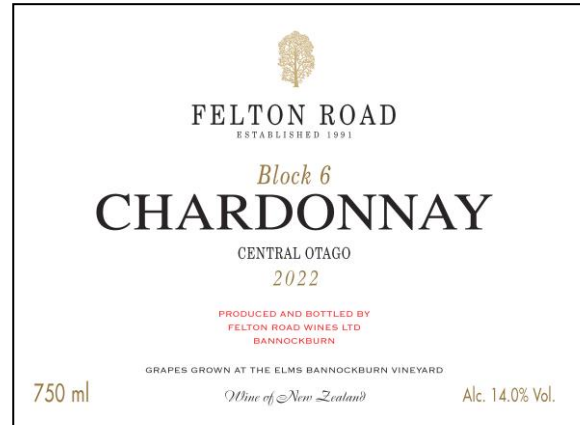
Introduction

Commencing with meticulous site selection and vineyard design in 1991, Felton Road's story is one of refusal to compromise. A strict 100% estate policy with fully organic and biodynamic viticulture (BioGro and 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, indigenous yeasts and malolactic, 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 34 ha in the Bannockburn subregion of Central Otago. Block 6 was planted in 1993 and is positioned on a north facing slope immediately south of Block 5 on The Elms vineyard. Its higher elevation (282-300m) and steeper slope favourably intercepts the sun but results in it being more wind exposed. 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

Regular rainfall throughout spring and early summer was higher than normal, and along with warmer soil temperatures, resulted in solid early season growth. Flowering commenced early in warm and ideal conditions with a cool spell and rain at the end, which had a minor effect on fruit set, but mainly confined to Riesling. A warm and dry January continued to advance development with veraison starting early and proceeding rapidly. Early February rain replenished drying soils and a cooler month was welcomed to arrest the advanced development. A return to warm and dry weather from early March meant grapes ripened quickly during the final stages. The Chardonnay harvest commenced early on March 16 and was completed by March 24.

Vinification

Predominantly Mendoza with some Dijon clone 95 Chardonnay from Block 6, was whole bunch pressed, settled overnight and flowed by gravity to barrel in the underground cellar. Fermentation with indigenous yeasts in seasoned French oak (only 5% new) was followed by a long and complete malolactic over the spring and summer. After 16 months in barrel (11 months on gross lees) the wine was racked carefully to tank for bottling in early-September 2023. The wine was not fined or filtered.

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