



Pegasus Bay Reserve

PRIMA DONNA

Pinot Noir 2015 Aged Release

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 over 30 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.

AGED RELEASE PROGRAM

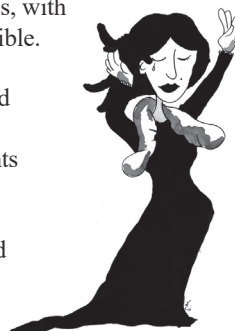
Our aged release program started back in 2006 when we set aside a few cases of our key varieties, Riesling & Pinot Noir, with the intention of releasing them in 2016, 10 years later. Stock has been set aside every vintage since. The inspiration for this came from the desire to offer our customers the opportunity to taste these wines in full maturity, something that is relatively rare these days. We consider this to be a particularly satisfying time to experience these wines with the added complexities of bottle age, while still offering years of good drinking ahead.

THE SEASON

Cooler than average Spring temperatures led to a smaller set, resulting in excellent fruit concentration. A warm Summer and long lingering Autumn then followed, allowing this smaller crop to reach optimum ripeness.

HARVEST AND WINE MAKING

Prima Donna is part of our reserve series which we only make in exceptional years, provided it does not compromise the quality of our estate wines. It is a selection from the best barrels, coming from some of the oldest plantings in the vineyard. As with all our Pinot's, we use traditional Burgundian winemaking methods. We picked the various blocks at different stages, depending on their maturity, aiming for a range of red and dark fruit flavours. Approximately one third of the grapes were put at the bottom of the fermentation vats as whole bunches, with the balance being destemmed on top, retaining as many whole berries as possible. The vats were kept cool over the next few days to help extract the soft, silky tannins from the pinot noir skins. After approximately a week, the must started to ferment naturally. During fermentation the floating cap of grape skins was gently plunged twice daily. When the fermentation finished, the grape remnants were left to steep in the wine for up to a week to help extract a different range of tannins that add structure and depth. The exact duration of this period was determined by daily tasting. Subsequently the wine was gently pressed off and put into oak barriques (30% new) from selected artisan Burgundian coopers. In the summer after harvest, when the weather warmed, the wine underwent a natural malo-lactic (secondary) fermentation. After maturing for 18 months, a selection from the best barriques (representing the many different plots & clones of pinot) was chosen and carefully blended, to produce the most complex and balanced wine possible.



THE WINE

It is deep ruby in colour, with brownish flecks towards the edge. The nose is a feast of vibrant red fruit suggesting raspberry, plum and pomegranate, anchored with a savoury underlay of spicy pepper, cinnamon, mushroom and black olive tapenade. Extended bottle age has given this wine a wonderfully complex and captivating bouquet. The palate is powerfully expressive, with a rich and textured mouth-feel, replete with velvety tannins and a seam of refreshing acidity that delivers a long and satisfying close.

HARVEST DATE	AVE. BRIX AT HARVEST	ALCOHOL CONTENT	R.S	T.A	AGING POTENTIAL
25th March - 20th April 2015	24	14%	Dry	5.3 g/l	Drink now