



SACRED HILL

2016 HELMSMAN
HAWKE'S BAY

BRAND STORY

Naming wines can be a tricky business, and inspiration can strike at the most unlikely moments – in this case behind the wheel of a John Deere 6300. We first sourced fruit for this wine from Hawke's Bay winegrower Allan Gunn. We'd struggled to find a name we all felt passionate about, until one day Allan was driving his tractor through the vineyard, listening to the radio commentary of the legendary defence of the America's Cup by Team New Zealand. Black Magic crossed the finish line and the bolt of inspiration hit. He phoned winemaker Tony Bish, convinced he'd found the elusive name for a great New Zealand wine. Helmsman was born.

VINTAGE SUMMARY

Vintage 2016 was somewhat of a roller coaster ride, with erratic weather, cool early summer, a blistering February, and culminating in a very successful harvest. Whew! Despite dire predictions of an extreme El Nino weather pattern that would bring hot dry winds and drought, Hawke's Bay experienced a cool and variable spring and early summer, with growing degree days running behind average. February however came in hot and strong, with very hot and dry conditions that caught up the ripeness on all varieties. March and April were smooth sailing, with threats of rain not materialising to any significant degree. Our later ripening red varieties thrived in the February heat and were picked at ideal maturity in April.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE

Fragrant and powerful, this wine is not shy!

Purple flowers mingle with sweet, exotic spice, crushed bay leaf and ripe blueberries. A hint of toasted, smoked nuts adds intrigue to the aromatics.

Generous and approachable on the palate with an intensity of ripe blueberries and blackcurrants, highlighted with sweet spice and a whiff of aromatic smoke. Concentrated and mouth filling with a freshness that give the wine an exquisite balance. Flavours and textures linger with elegance on the palate. An uplifting wine.

VINIFICATION

The fine and stable weather during the latter part of the 2016 growing season allowed us to hand pick our Cabernets and Merlot in perfect health with ripe tannins and flavours. Each variety was fermented separately in small open topped vats with indigenous yeast. The grapes spent 30 to 40 days in the fermenting vats before running off the new wine and pressing the skins in our basket press. The new wines went to French oak barrels as individual grape varieties and were carefully blended in September 2016 to make Helmsman. The blend was then returned to French oak barrels, 50 % of which were new, for a further 12 months ageing. A total of 17 months in French oak barrels. The wine was lightly fined using fresh egg whites and bottled unfiltered in December 2017.

NEW ZEALAND
SUSTAINABLE
WINEGROWING



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VARIETY	56% Cabernet Sauvignon, 22 % Merlot, 22% Cabernet Franc	ALCOHOL	13.5%
REGION	Hawke's Bay	PA	3.76
FOOD MATCHES	Rosemary and thyme crusted lamb rump	TA	6.1 g/L
CELLARING	Decant if drinking while young. Offers excellent cellaring potential of 8-10+ years	WINEMAKER	Tony Bish/Jenny Dobson
RS	Dry	FRUIT SOURCE / SUB REGION	Deerstalkers Vineyard, Gimblett Gravels, Hawke's Bay
		1ST YEAR OF PRODUCTION	1997
		BOTTLING DATE	20/12/17
		CASES PRODUCED	200 dozen