



SACRED HILL

RIFLEMAN'S CHARDONNAY

2019 HAWKE'S BAY



The Rifleman's Vineyard is set on a beautiful, elevated river terrace. Our grapes have always thrived there – and, in the early days, so did the birds. With no other food source for some distance they gorged daily on our precious fruit. We responded with equal fervour, brandishing shotguns while riding the quads or walking the block. When we'd successfully harvested and pressed to barrel, we chalked up 'Shotgun Chardonnay' on the barrelheads. When it came to bottling we decided on a more positive spin and called the wine Rifleman's – the name of a little known native bird, whose Maori name, Titipounamu, means Little Greenstone.

VINTAGE SUMMARY

The 2019 season was ultimately one that winemakers loved. Fruit was in perfect condition across all Hawke's Bay varieties, loaded with intensity. A combination of the long summer and lower fruit yields meant that the harvest occurred around two weeks earlier than the long-term average.

Our Chardonnay fruit was perfectly balanced with the winemakers believing this will be a vintage to compete with the best.

WINEMAKER'S NOTE

This elegant wine offers complex aromas of zest of lemon and lime, citrus flowers and baking spices supported by toasted almonds, butterscotch and vanilla. Richly textured, the palate has fabulous flesh and power, finishing with lime zest flavours.

VINIFICATION

Hand-picked fruit from our own-rooted Mendoza Chardonnay vines were whole bunch pressed to retain delicacy and pure fruit flavours. The juice was briefly settled then transferred to tightly grained French oak barrels, 80% of which were new, for ferment. Regular lees stirring throughout Malolactic fermentation (100%) has aided texture and richness. Ageing in our temperature-controlled barrel room for 12 months ensures freshness and retains the power and elegance of this wine. Minimally handled to bottle.



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VARIETY	Chardonnay
REGION	Hawke's Bay
FOOD MATCHES	Crayfish, white meats and spring lamb
CELLARING	10 - 15 years
RS	Dry
ALCOHOL	13.5 %
PH	3.55
TA	5.7 g/L

HARVEST DATE	22/03/2019 & 25/03/2019
FRUIT SOURCE / SUB REGION	Rifleman's Vineyard, Dartmoor Valley, Hawke's Bay
1ST YEAR OF PRODUCTION	1995
BOTTLING DATE	27/05/2020