

Blank Canvas

Blank Canvas 'Escaroth' Chardonnay 2019

TASTING NOTE The inaugural release of the Escaroth Chardonnay situated in Marlborough's Taylor Pass heralds a bright, zesty grapefruit and lemon fruit profile coupled with toasted brioche, musk and a savoury nuttiness. It possesses a chalky texture that is borne upon precise, defined acidity. Our Chardonnay philosophy is very much about minimal intervention but maximum satisfaction, and we find the wild fermentation, lees maturation, zero battonage and natural malolactic fermentation in a mixed format oak regime results in a complex and layered palate. This style is rewarding to drink now showing generosity and charm but will certainly go the distance in the cellar if you can keep your hands off it.

VINTAGE 2019 was one of the driest vintages on record and for many in the region one of the lowest cropping. A relatively wet Spring provided good early season growth, though a cool flowering period resulting in low berry numbers for Chardonnay. The dry conditions with only trivial rainfall between Christmas and the 10 March meant there was zero disease pressure and produced exceptionally clean, healthy fruit. Overall the Chardonnay of 2019 produced very generous, ripe fruit flavours and beautiful intensity and richness on the palate.

VITICULTURE The 'Escaroth' vineyard is home to dedicated growers and friends Andy and Kyna Laurie. Situated in the Taylor Pass subregion of the Southern Valleys, they first planted vines on their land at the turn of the Millennium. The Chardonnay was reincarnated from old Riesling vines several years ago and consists of 100% Clone 95, which we love for its elegance and aromatic complexity. The vineyard is on the highest part of the vineyard, nestled on a beautiful north facing slope. It is dry-farmed and tended by hand. We hand-harvested the Escaroth Chardonnay on the 26th March 2019.

WINEMAKING Simply and sincerely made, this Chardonnay was gently whole-bunch pressed with the very cloudy free-run juice only going to new and seasoned French oak puncheons (500L) as well as barriques (30% new). There we left it to kick off wild fermentation. The wine was left to its own devices, without sulphur or lees stirring throughout maturation, and it underwent natural malolactic fermentation in the Spring. We carefully racked it and bottled it without filtration on the 2nd April 2020.

157 cases produced.

TECHNICAL ANALYSES

Alcohol	13.3%	pH	3.38
Residual Sugar	Nil	Acidity	5.8 g/l
Total SO ₂	59 mg/l		

