

MAISON NOIRE

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Cabernet Franc 2014

Vintage conditions

2013/2014:

After a warm winter, the conditions were set to some high disease pressure. There was a medium frost pressure during bud burst and a bit of rain during flowering which led to a medium fruit set in early summer. These unsettled conditions continued through to mid summer so opening canopy and spraying was essential to keep good crop levels and optimise maturity. A typical dry Hawkes Bay end of summer and autumn followed which led to very good quality harvested fruit.

Tasting notes

Aim:

My aim with this wine is to propose a high class medium bodied wine inspired by the Loire Valley style in France. It will be multi layered, elegant, complex and round in the palate with a good ageing potential.

Technique used:

The Cabernet Franc grapes, grown on northern facing hills near Maraekakaho, were hand harvested in early April 2014 in pristine condition.

They were kept cold on skin contact in an open stainless steel fermenter for 10 days to extract colour and fruit flavours. Then some dried stems were added and the tank was warmed up and fermented dry for 14 days, using plunge downs and delestage for optimal extraction of colour, flavour and tannins.

It was kept on skins for a further 10 days before being pressed in french barrels (new and seasoned). The barrels went through malolactic fermentation before being sulphured and aged for 20 months. During this time they were racked off their lees several times to obtain a natural clarification.

After ageing, the barrels were blended and the wine was coarsely filtered without fining to retain most of the original characters prior to bottling in February 2016.

Result:

This is a very sophisticated, complex and elegant wine that reveals itself sip after sip. At first there is the sensation of bursting raspberry, soft tannins and long finish. On the second sip there is the sensation of entering the forrest, with subtle notes of fungus, earthy characters, dried herbs and forrest floor, followed by the complexity of a mixture of wild berries. With no sugar or copper added it is on the lower side of alcohol strength and will be able to age gracefully for many years. It will accompany beautifully most fine and gastronomical cuisine based on the finest cuts of meat. Optimum drinking time is 2018-2019; will develop cigar box flavours past 2020.

Analysis at bottling:

pH=3.47

TA=6.53

Alc.=12.4% Vol.