

# MAISON NOIRE

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## Chardonnay 2016

### Vintage conditions

#### 2015/2016:

A relatively dry and cold winter was followed by a very wet and warm early spring, almost frost free, so bud burst was above average and disease pressure high. This was followed by patchy weather conditions until mid-summer, with episodes of heavy rain as well as dips of colder than usual temperatures. With average crop levels following flowering, high disease pressure and on going vines' growth, it was essential to open the canopy and keep on top of the spraying to optimise maturity. A welcome dry February was followed by a wet March, but the fruit kept good flavours and was harvested in the gaps of nice weather. The late ripening varieties proved excellent with an amazing indian summer starting in April.

### Tasting notes

#### Aim:

My aim with this wine is simply to propose a complex barrel fermented Chardonnay without the Malolactic fermentation characteristics. It should retain freshness, fruitiness and have a nice balance of integrated oak.

#### Technique used:

The wine is a blend of 3 different vineyards: alluvial plains on the banks of the Tuki Tuki river, hill sides from the South of the Heretaunga plains and a coastal vineyard close to Te Awanga. Half of these grapes went through a 12 hour skin maceration, followed by a 1 week cold stabulation, before being fermented dry, on full lees, and on oak; they are then dropped in young barrels for ageing. The other half was pressed straight into seasoned barrels and fermented dry on full lees. Once dry and sulphured, these barrels were racked off their gross lees, blended, and returned on fine lees for a 6 months barrel ageing. All the barrels were blended, lightly fined and filtered prior to bottling in December 2016.

#### Result:

The first nose and palate reveal some very appealing notes of Jasmine, mango and mandarin zest, whilst still being fresh and crisp. The mid-palate is rich, complex and textured, and shows aromas of almond and nougat, entwined by a fragrant smokiness and mineral notes. The finish is long and lingering, yet round and creamy.

Made without addition of copper or sugar, it is on the lower side of alcohol strength, although retaining a great ageing potential that will allow a fine integration of all its elements.

It can be enjoyed on its own, and will be a great match to a wide variety of dishes, from appetisers to a cheese course and all elaborated mains.

Optimum drinking time is 2018 to 2020, but will develop fine tertiary aromas beyond 2021.

#### Analysis at bottling:

pH=3.68

TA=6.53

Alc.=12.1% Vol.