

MAISON NOIRE

maisonnoire1286@gmail.com

Arneis 2019

Vintage conditions

2019/2020:

This season followed some normal regional patterns until it reached a droughty summer. Good amount of rainfall from winter to mid-spring, with enough frosts to reduce pests pressure but not overly affecting the bud burst period. Overall a good layout of fruit that was allowed by dryer conditions around flowering, but still some pressure of powdery mildew that had to be dealt with careful spraying program.

From November to April though, the weather tap seemed to totally dry out, with very little rainfall and lower disease pressure around picking time. The droughty conditions let early varieties to be fully ripe early in the season in some parts of the Hawkes Bay, while they slowed the maturation of later varieties suffering from lack of water (in non-irrigated vineyards such as the Maison Noire Home Block). However, the overall quality of the grapes was great with very deep flavours and clean fruit apart from bird peck damage that could be sorted out during manual picking.

In March the country went to lockdown due to the COVID-19 epidemic, which made the hand picking and logistics very challenging. A vintage that we will remember for years to come!

Tasting notes

Aim:

My aim with this Italian variety is to make a fresh and aromatic wine, perfect for spring and summer. It should be fruit driven with good complexity and acids, and round on the palate with a slightly off-dry finish.

Technique used:

The Arneis grapes, grown on a single vineyard in the Tuki-Tuki plains near Havelock North, were hand picked in 2 picks (only 5 pickers allowed due to COVID-19 lockdown) in very late March 2020. The grapes had great flavours and the concentration was very promising, although a bit of hand sorting was required due to some bird peck damage. The grapes were pressed and transferred in a stainless steel vessel at low temperature (under 5°C) and racked off the juice lees a couple of days after. The juice was then inoculated and fermented in a stainless steel tank until the final balance got reached at 9-10g/L residual sugar. It was sulphured and kept on full lees in a cold tank for a couple of months, which helped to cold-stabilise it early. It was then racked, fined and filtered before bottling in August 2020.

Result:

In line with the previous vintage, this is a fresh aromatic wine with great balance and complexity. Dominance of white fleshed juicy fruit, including pear, nectarines and lychee in the palate with inviting floral notes. It is followed by a rich mid-palate with bursts of orange rind and finishes smoothly with a golden liquid honey feeling. Delicious with tapas and hors-d'oeuvres as well as seafood and cheeses, it is a perfect match for spring and summer!

Analysis at bottling:

pH=3.35

TA=6.59 g/l

Alc=13.74% Vol.

RS=9.8 g/l