

MAISON NOIRE

Rosé 2020

Tasting notes

Winemaking:

The Cabernet Franc grapes, grown on our single vineyard, were hand harvested in great condition in late March 2020 alongside the Arneis grapes, grown on the Tuki-Tuki plains near Havelock North, also hand harvested with great flavours.

The Cabernet Franc grapes were destemmed and left on skin contact overnight, pressed, and blended with a smaller amount of the Arneis juice. This juice blend was then fermented in a stainless steel vessel at low temperature (under 16°C) until sulphured when the perfect balance of residual sugars was reached. The wine was then racked off its lees and left for ageing in a closed stainless steel vessel. During the ageing it was racked a couple of times to obtain a natural clarification. It was then lightly fined and filtered before bottling in August 2020.

Result:

This is a fresh, crisp wine with a delightful raspberry flavour and hints of pear and citrus. It is simple and yet sophisticated, with a very smooth dry and lingering finish. A fresh and round sensation at the end of the palate makes it very easy to drink. It is delicious on its own, or great with salads and spicy dishes such as Thai and moroccan flavoured cooking. Optimum drinking time is 2020 - 2022.

Analysis at bottling:

pH=3.17

TA=7.07 g/l

Alc=12.56% Vol.

RS=2.9 g/l

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!

Reviews (extract)

- **Yvonne Lorkin (4 stars):** "This Provençale-style rosé from French winemaker Guillaume Thomas is lipsmackingly dry, layered with soft redcurrant and cherry characters and stitched together with attractive spices. Ultra-fresh acidity and a super-succulent texture make for a sunny day in your mouth no matter what the weather. Cleansing, feisty and full of personality.
- **Sam Kim (4½ stars):** "Attractively fruited and elegantly lifted, the bouquet shows Gala apple, citrus peel and subtle spicy notes, followed by a beautifully focused palate that's linear and persistent. It's nicely textured with vibrant acidity, finishing lingering and pleasingly dry.