

Black Estate Home Chardonnay 2023

Pale straw/white gold hue. Fresh, delicate aromas of wild strawberry, melon, nectarine, and straw. The palate is full bodied, concentrated and textural with white peach, yuzu, and honey with vibrant saline characters. This is an unfiltered wine with small amounts of sediment. Please allow the bottle to stand and settle before pouring. Decanting will allow maximum expression of aroma and purity of fruit to emerge. Drink now to 2030.

Vineyard

This Black Estate Home Chardonnay was grown on our 12 Ha vineyard located 6 kilometres North East of the Waipara Junction, in the Omihi sub-district of Waipara Valley, North Canterbury. This is a north facing sedimentary clay fan on a gentle hill side slope. The soils are mainly Awapuni clay with calcium carbonate deposits. This wine includes fruit from vines planted in 1994 and 2011. The original 3.8 ha vineyard planted at 1841 vines/ha has ungrafted Mendoza Chardonnay vines planted in 1994. The more recent planting completed in 2011 is 1.0 ha planted at 6177 vine/ha with Mendoza, B95, ENTAV-INRA®548, and ENTAV-INRA®1066 clones, all planted on 3309 rootstock. The Home Vineyard is fully certified organic with BioGro.

Season

Winter and early spring rainfalls meant vines started the growing season in spring with adequate soil moisture. Some cool night time temperatures in September kept us on frost alert but we were able to avoid any frost damage. Timing of bud burst and flowering ran seven to ten days later than previous seasons but in line the the long term average. Buds burst occurred at the Home Block around the Spring equinox. Shoot growth was even across the block and kept the field team busy with hand weeding, shoot thinning, and then wire lifting. Post flowering we experienced higher humidity levels than normal which averaged 82% through the normally dry December, January, and February months.

Thorough leaf removal around the fruit zone was undertaken through the blocks and spray intervals were tightened up to manage the potentially high disease pressure from powdery mildew. Harvest commenced in mid March where our field team carefully hand harvest and sort each bunch of fruit to ensure the best possible flavours of the season could be captured. A machine harvester was used where weather threatened the crop and allowed us to bring our fruit in as quickly as possible where fruit appeared fragile. We are relieved and happy to savour every wine from this unique and challenging season.

Harvest

Hand harvested on March 16 to 18 March 2023

6.6 Tons Yield = 0.71- 1.18kg/vine 40HL/HA
Brix 22.4 - 23.2 TA 7.35 - 9.15 g/L
pH 3.06 - 3.12.

Fermentation

Hand harvested grapes were whole bunch pressed over a 4 hour press cycle. The pressed juice was settled for 24 hours and then transferred to seasoned 500L barrels made from tight grained French oak. 21 percent were new. No additions were made to the juice except vineyard derived yeast propagated from a vineyard starter from the Home vineyard. The wine matured on fermentation lees and then went through full Malo-lactic fermentation in early spring. The wine was blended to tank after 8 months in barrel, allowed to settle for one month and then bottled without fining or filtration. 40 ppm of sulphur dioxide (sulphites) was added.

Bottled

497 (12 x 750ml) cases bottled in one lot under screw cap on Dec 12 2023.

R.S 2.8 g/L TA 6.5 g/L pH 3.32
Dry extract 26.5 g/L Alcohol 13.5%
Total SO₂ 42ppm

