

Vintage Report 2015



“Three in a row?”

Like a troupe of thespians trying not to speak of Macbeth in a theatre, Vintners all over Hawkes Bay dared not utter these words for fear of courting disaster.

A cool spring had left the vines with lighter, balanced crop loads, and a warm dry January and February had everything set up perfectly for yet another fine vintage to follow on from the exemplary 2013 and 2014 seasons.

As in the previous year however, another tropical storm threatened to spoil the party, this time she came in the form of “Cyclone Pam”. Despite the benign name, Pam was cutting a path of destruction through the South Pacific and was tracking for a direct hit on the East coast of the North Island. Thankfully Pam slid eastwards into the vast expanse of the Southern Pacific Ocean and our precious grapes were spared from nature’s destructive force for a second year in a row.

In the warmth of the North Island, the aromatic varieties are usually the first to be picked, and the Pinot Gris grapes got the vintage underway in fine style. The 2015 Left Field Hawkes Bay Pinot Gris has delivered incredible concentration and texture and is the finest Pinot Gris to come out of our winery to date.

As I write this, the 2015 version of the already infamous Left Field Albarino is being prepared for bottling and will shortly be winging its way to a rapidly growing fan base. Those fans will be pleased to know we managed to secure more supply of this rare grape from the Gisborne region, and again the quality looks outstanding. Two quite challenging vintages in Gisborne have now delivered two great wines so the future is bright for this wine as it looks well suited to the New Zealand conditions.

Heading south, The Nelson region also had a cool spring which left the Sauvignon Blanc vines with light, balanced crops which delivered amazing aromatics balanced with the typical Nelson softness and texture on the palate. Excitingly, the Te Awa sense of exploration has also seen us harvest our first Pinot Noir grapes from the clay soils of the Moutere Hills sub-region of Nelson. Watch this space.

Back on the Te Awa Estate in Hawkes Bay, the leaves have all gone now and the vineyard is occupied by sheep quietly grazing amongst the rows and by our pruners, who have started work on the vines setting them up for the next vintage. Of the wines from our estate this year, the Chardonnay is quietly finishing up its natural ferment, and the Reds are ticking their way through malolactic fermentation. Three in a row? It’s early, but the wines are well balanced and have a lovely understated refinement about them. They promise great things.



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