



Grapes
39% Merlot
31% Malbec
30% Cabernet Sauvignon

Region/Appellation
Hawkes Bay

Alcohol by volume
14%

Residual Sugar
0.27 g/l

pH
3.76

Total Acidity
5.54 g/l

Drinking Window
2025 - 2029

Tasting Guide
A B C **D** E
Light Medium Full

Tasting note printed
07/12/2025

River Gravel

Merlot/Malbec/Cabernet Sauvignon 2019 6x75cl

Winemaker Notes

Rich aromas of black fruit and fragrant spicy oak dominate this sumptuous red wine. The palate is full-bodied with incredible concentration of supple, rich ripe fruit, smooth ripe tannins, beautifully integrated oak and great complexity.

Vineyard

This wine is a blend from grapes grown on the stony soils of the Gimblett Gravels. The vines in the Ngakirikiri, Twyford and Omaha Gravels vineyards are now approaching 20 years of age and are cropped at low levels to produce grapes of the highest possible quality. Intensive viticultural practices such as shoot and bunch thinning and leaf plucking were employed over the course of the growing season to further maximise the vineyards' potential.

Winemaking

The individual vineyard parcels were harvested separately and destemmed to our open topped concrete fermenters for fermentation. Indigenous and selected red wine yeast strains were employed and once the ferments were gently hand plunged up to four times daily. After a period of post fermentation maceration the ferments were pressed to barrel and tank for malolactic fermentation. The wine was then aged for 16 months in French oak barriques (45% new) before bottling.

Vintage

The 2019 harvest was one of the finest Winemaker Gordon Russell has ever experienced. Spring was cool and wet and the weather over key flowering periods seemed unkind at the time. Crops were eventually down as much as 25%, but this alone does not explain the quality of the fruit at harvest. Summer was fine and warm with intermittent rain keeping a drought prone province green, the vines seemingly never under any stress. Veraison though had proceeded quickly over a fine spell of weather which would give consistency to the ripeness of berries. Harvest arrived slightly early but no records were broken here. In fact it seemed very much a normal harvest until we approached our first pick. The berries though had developed abnormally thick skins blessed with an abundance of colour and flavour. This coupled with a spell of fine weather over harvest period, allowed us to pick when full ripeness had been achieved. Both whites and reds have excelled.

Food match

Enjoy with red meat and game dishes.

