

TOM Chardonnay 2006

This iconic, concentrated, textural and elegant Chardonnay is from an exceptional vintage and represents the very best Hawke's Bay can produce. Crafted from grapes from our lowest-yielding vineyards, this wine was made using traditional French winemaking techniques combined with our collective experience of producing Chardonnay in New Zealand.

DESCRIPTION

TOM Chardonnay 2006 is a full-bodied, characterful and complex wine. Crafted from extremely low-cropping vines and harvested in a warm Hawke's Bay vintage, this wine is built around a core of ripe fruit, notably stone fruit and ripe melon, accompanied by hints of citrus. Winemaking techniques, including cloudy juice ferments, wild yeast primary and wild malolactic fermentations as well as a selection of our finest French oak barrels, have overlaid complexing aromas and flavours of roasted nuts, subtle toasted sourdough and mineral nuances with a hint of gunflint. On the palate, the wine is full and concentrated, yet with a finesse and incredible textural length that ensures the overall profile of the wine is one of elegance as well as power.

CELLARING

Released three years after vintage, TOM Chardonnay has already spent considerable time maturing in barrel and bottle, allowing the various attributes of the wine to meld together into a harmonious and complete whole. As a result, TOM Chardonnay is very approachable now but has the power and complexity to mature further in bottle for an estimated five to seven years under favourable cellaring conditions.

WINE:	TOM Chardonnay
VINTAGE:	2006
RELEASE DATE:	October 2009
VARIETY:	Chardonnay; 51% Clone 95, 49% Clone 15
REGION:	Hawke's Bay; 51% Oamaru, 49% Korokipo
ALCOHOL:	14.5%
pH:	3.49
TITRATABLE ACIDITY:	5.76 g/l
RESIDUAL SUGAR:	<2 g/l
HARVEST NOTES:	2006 was a low-yielding year with high levels of flavour concentration. New Chardonnay clones were harvested with Clone 95 providing subtle stone fruit, melon, fig and nutty aromatics with great textural length and Clone 15 giving vibrant, weighty wines with good acid backbone and flavours of stone fruit and tropical fruit. All grapes were hand harvested to reduce phenolic pick-up and avoid harshness. It also allows a selective picking to be carried out in the vineyard ensuring only the highest quality grapes are harvested.
FERMENTATION NOTES:	Whole bunches are loaded into the press, rather than being destemmed and crushed first. This minimizes phenolic extraction from the skin. The must is immediately expressed away from the skin direct to barrels and is splashed off the press to promote some oxidation. This helps to further reduce phenolics and increase age worthiness. Fermentation is allowed to occur naturally in barrel, with wild yeasts derived from the vineyard. With wild yeast fermentation a range of different yeasts exist at different stages of the fermentation, each contributing something unique to the final wine. By the time the wild fermentation has finished, wild malolactic fermentations have begun. These are allowed to complete, with the wines kept warm and tasted weekly until any overtly buttery characters have disappeared.
MATURATION:	The wine is allowed to mature in barrel on full yeast lees for 14 months with stirring once a fortnight to add textural interest to the wine. Only French oak is used and barrels are selected on their ability to add weight, structure and interesting complexity to the wine without making it overtly woody. After blending, the wine was allowed to mature for a further 18 months in tank on light yeast lees.
BOTTLING:	The wine was estate bottled after a light coarse filtration, with no palate fining required.