

KUMEU RIVER

2011 Maté's Vineyard Chardonnay



Vineyard Region

Kumeu is a sub-region of the Auckland wine district. Despite being situated well north of New Zealand's other viticultural regions, Kumeu's climate is kept cool due to its close proximity to the Tasman Sea, just 20 kilometers (nearly 12.5 miles) to the west, and the Pacific Ocean 30 kilometers (18.6 miles) to the east. These two large bodies of water generate clouds, keeping peak summer temperatures below 30 degrees Celsius (86 degrees Fahrenheit).

Maté's Vineyard

In 1990, Maté Brajkovich reworked the land at Kumeu River and planted a new vineyard of Chardonnay on the site of the family's original vineyard, purchased in 1944. The first harvest from these new vines was in March 1993, the year following Maté's death. The 6-acre vineyard was named Maté's Vineyard in his honor, and the resulting single-vineyard wine was first released in November 1994 to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the Brajkovich family's arrival in Kumeu.

Vintage Notes

2011 was a challenging vintage with cooler-than-usual conditions leading up to harvest. The grapes struggled to attain high sugar levels, but a very moderate cropping level still allowed the development of ripe-fruit aroma and flavor intensity. Following near-perfect conditions in 2010, Kumeu River had to work harder in 2011 in the vineyards due to pockets of botrytis. This vintage really showed the value of hand-harvesting and strict field triage because the fruit arriving at the winery was in perfect condition.

Technical Information

Varietal Composition: 100% Chardonnay

Vinification: Whole-bunch pressed
Indigenous yeast fermentation
100% barrel fermentation
100% malolactic fermentation
Aged 11 months in 30% new, 70% 1-5-year-old 225-liter/60-gallon French oak

Production: 1,000 cases (12/750ml)

Tasting Notes

This is the 19th vintage of the Maté's Vineyard Chardonnay produced from the low-yielding Mendoza clone. The clone's vine age and distinctive characteristics contribute to the wine's uniqueness. The wine displays a lifted fruit aroma reminiscent of ripe pears, but with a mineral edge; the palate is long and concentrated. The 2011 exhibits the complexity and concentration expected from this vineyard, with great tautness and length on the palate. It will evolve beautifully over the next six to eight years and beyond.

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