

2021 Rays Road Chardonnay



Rays Road Vineyard

Rays Road is Kumeu River's vineyard site in Hawkes Bay that was purchased in 2017. This limestone hillside is at 180 m altitude, with a northerly aspect. It is dry-farmed to yield high quality grapes for wine under the Rays Road name for our Kumeu River label. This Chardonnay was hand-harvested, whole bunch pressed and fermented with wild yeast in older French Oak barrels to give a wine that is zesty and fragrant, with mineral complexity that is very true to its site.

<i>Vineyard Region:</i>	Hawkes Bay, North Island
<i>Cultivation:</i>	Sustainable
<i>Size:</i>	19 acres
<i>Vine Age:</i>	4-13 years
<i>Clones:</i>	95, 15, 548
<i>Soil:</i>	Limestone
<i>Elevation:</i>	180 meters
<i>Training:</i>	VSP 2.2m x 1.5m

Vintage Notes

The winter of 2020 was relatively mild and dry. Spring came early, but there were frosts to contend with. Thankfully damage at Rays Road was minimal. Flowering took place well ahead of normal, and it was obvious that the season would be very early this year. The growing season rainfall was only sporadic, maintaining the dry conditions, and the temperatures were moderately warm. These relatively cool to warm, and dry conditions allowed for slow grape maturation, and the development of excellent fruit aromas and flavors. In Hawkes Bay, our Rays Road vineyard performed admirably, with the grapes ripening a few days later than our Kumeu vineyards.

Technical Information

<i>Varietal Composition:</i>	100% Chardonnay
<i>Vinification:</i>	Hand harvested Whole-bunch pressed Indigenous-yeast fermentation 100% barrel fermentation 100% malolactic fermentation 11 months maturation in barrel
<i>Alcohol:</i>	13.5%

Tasting Notes

With new clonal plantings of Chardonnay in their second year of production, we were able to blend some extra ripeness and richness with the fresh limestone vibrancy of the existing vines. The result is an exciting Rays Road Chardonnay showing white flowers and lemon on the nose, with rich texture and vibrant acidity on the palate.