



NOBLE SEMILLON
2011



Harvest Dates
23rd May
Brix at Harvest
45
Analysis at Bottling
pH **3.62**
T.A. **9.8g/l**
Residual Sugar **315g/l**
Alcohol **9%**
Cases produced
100

Viticultural Practice
Plant Density:
2.8 x 1.5m
Trellis System:
**2 cane Vertically Shoot
Positioned Trellis**
Canopy Management:
**Trimmed x2
Leaf Plucking x 1**
Yield: **4.4 tonne/ha**

WINEMAKER'S VINTAGE REPORT

Vintage 2011 was very much influenced by one phenomena, a mild summer with warm temperatures and regular small amounts of rain which resulted in healthy vines with larger berries. So for those of you who can still remember your school math on the volume of a circle – a very small increase in diameter translates to a large increase in volume. By my estimate, 15-20% more tons per hectare than expected in Marlborough. We were committed to serious shoot and crop removal to ensure correct crop yields and quality fruit. Timing wise; the ideal summer climate insured an early start to the vintage, March 20th, and we had all but wrapped up vintage by April 10th without any really challenging climatic events. I was even able to get one day of fishing over Easter, in the Marlborough Sounds! Later April/early May rain ensured full ripe grapes that were set aside for sweet wines, received an overwhelming botrytis infection - a vintage for dessert wines. Reward for the complete failure of 2010 to deliver botrytised grapes! Overall a good vintage without climatic compromise, but perhaps one where human and economic pressure will see a large diversity in wine quality – my tip; know your winemaker.

NOBLE SEMILLON PROFILE

One of the great white grape varieties of the world for both dry and sweet wines; but sadly now out of favour and little grown in New Zealand. Whilst late ripening; when fully ripe it shows delicate lanolin, straw, dry herb aromas, retains good acidity and under wet humid conditions is very susceptible to botrytis rot. Vintage 2011 produced climatic conditions exactly to these specifications – long dry, slow ripening period into late April, then a series of warmer wetter days in early May when rot occurred and finally a warm dry windy week to dehydrate and concentrate the grapes. The result, Semillon grapes with sugars exceeding 40 Brix (40% sugar), high natural acidity – 10g/l and 90% plus botrytis affected – the perfect substrate for great sweet wine.

TASTING NOTES

Wow – it's been 14 years since my last botrytised Semillon – a long time between drinks; but boy has it been worth the wait! All dark toffee, bees wax, wild bush honey and cream caramel with just a hint of lemon curd. Sweet opulent palate and fresh lingering finish.

QUINTESSENTIAL MARLBOROUGH

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