

Mahi

TWIN VALLEYS CHARDONNAY 2006

This wine from Mahi is a single-estate wine that expresses the particular vineyard from which it comes. The grapes are handpicked and the wines made simply, with the focus being on gentle handling and indigenous yeast ferments.

This wine comes from a small parcel in the Twin Valley Vineyard, located in the Fareham Lane area of Marlborough. The vineyard, owned and run by Pete and Anne Reed, is at the western end of the Wairau Valley, just where it meets the Waihopai Valley. The influence of the constant river action in the past means that a lot of the silt has been washed away and the remaining soils are both rocky and devigourated.

Being some distance from the sea the climate is also cooler as you move away from the tempering effect of the water and also gain some elevation. The grapes therefore typically ripen more slowly and retain an interesting mineral character.

The vines are all from the favoured Clone 95 which we have found suits this area as it comes in with a good acid balance which we endeavour to retain. The vines were cropped low to ensure ripeness and palate richness and the fruit was picked on March 10, 2006.

In the winery the grapes were whole-cluster pressed and the high-solids juice was taken straight to French barriques for fermentation with indigenous yeast. After 12 months in wood we felt the balance was correct and so took the wine from barrel. It was then aged another few months in tank on yeast lees prior to being racked and gently fined before bottling.

The style we are aiming at for this Chardonnay is to retain a fresh structure rather than producing a wine that is too broad. We therefore minimise the malolactic fermentation so that it is really the vineyard, fruit, wild-ferment and barrel characters that make up the complex nose and palate.

The wines of Mahi are not rushed to bottle and we believe that with correct storage this wine will continue to develop in interest and complexity.

