

2009 Arona Winemaking Details

Technical Details

Region	Blind River, Awatere Valley, Marlborough
Clone & Rootstock	66% Mass Select on 101-14 12% Mass Select on Riparia Gloire – reduced yield vines (fruit dropped) 10% Mass Select on Riparia Gloire – fully producing vines 6% Mass Select on Riparia Gloire – first crop vines 6% 239 Riesling on Riparia Gloire
Pick Date	6% 26 th March 18% 31 st March 56% 3 rd April 20% 15 th April
Harvest (in tank) Analyses	37% °B – 21.7 pH – 3.19 TA – 9.7 20% °B – 22.7 pH – 3.28 TA – 10.1 19% °B – 22.0 pH – 3.17 TA – 10.6 18% °B – 23.7 pH – 3.20 TA – 10.7 6% °B – 23.3 pH – 3.20 TA – 10.5 6% °B – 22.3 pH – 3.01 TA – 11.3
Fermentation	100% Stainless Steel 48% at 11° C with VL3 37% at 11° C with VIN13 9% at 11° C with X5 6% at 11° C with Oenoferm “Riesling”
Blending	80% Muritai fruit 20% Blind River fruit from Tate Estate (3km west of Muritai)
Post Ferment Operations	Fined with low rates of Gecoll Supra (highly refined Gelatin) Cold Stabilised Protein Stabilised by addition of bentonite
Residual Sugar	5.3g/L
pH	3.30
TA (Titratable Acidity)	7.7g/L
Alcohol	12.7 (13.0)

Philosophy and the 2009 Wine

- 1) An entry-level wine that is classic Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc in a fruity, up front, easy drinking style. Softer, more instantly approachable and with more ripe fruit flavours than 3-Brooms and Ranga Ranga this is intended as a good introduction to Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc.
- 2) 2009 harvest picking decisions were the most difficult yet for us at Muritai, with genuinely high acid levels being the major concern. This growing season, we had two major issues that we have never had before. Firstly there was botrytis in certain parts of the vineyard, caused by rain and warm temperatures at veraison. Luckily, half of the vineyard remained unaffected but we had to drop some botty fruit out. Second was the issue of overcropping, both from a physiological and commercial standpoint. To alleviate this potential problem, we shoot thinned just before Christmas and dropped fruit according to our best calculations at trying to achieve 12 T/ha. Ironically, luckily and somewhat unsurprisingly, the area of the vineyard affected by botrytis was also the area that was carrying the most fruit so, for the most part, dropping the bot out also dealt with the yield control issues. We did, however, need to drop further fruit from about 25% of the vineyard. The other major difference this year is that this wine is made from 100% Awatere Valley fruit, meaning we lost the fuller, riper, broader flavours associated with fruit from the Wairau Valley. This, allied to the higher acid meant that the fruit hung out a little longer than we might have left it – although, in the final wash up, the alcohol level is actually slightly lower than the 2008 wine.
- 3) So, once in the winery, the key decisions revolved around acidity and fermentation management. As is consistent with our “minimal intervention” philosophy, no de-acidification was undertaken.
- 4) This wine has had longer on lees than last year, and as much of the clean lees as possible has been kept in the wine (indeed, the wine is still in tank as I write – Sept 2 – and remains on lees). This is to help offset the higher toned acidity and provide more softness and better balance to the mid-palate.
- 5) This is the most complex blend, in terms of the number of components it has in it but that is mainly born out of the fact that the other two wines are of a more specific style and are, I suppose, actually “simpler” to blend,.
- 6) The final wine is slightly sweeter than last year, to try to balance the crisper than usual acidity, which is both measurably higher and appears higher from a sensory perception view.
- 7) This wine retains its splash of Riesling, although it was less this year, due to the fact that we had more S Blanc available. It is, however a policy that I think we will continue with as it aids in lifting the aromatics of the wine and promoting its fruitier style.
- 8) As ever, all fining trials are conducted completely blind so the truth will out and whatever the results, we go with it.