

WINE PROFILE

This flagship Chardonnay expresses a medley of peach and melon flavours, overlaid with toasty oak. A rich, ripe style with finely integrated oak and a taut but harmonious acidity on the finish.

DATE HARVESTED	16 March 2017
DATE BOTTLED	13 February 2018
DATE RELEASED	01 March 2019
NUMBER OF BOTTLES	4236 bottles
FERMENTATION	Natural yeast using Pied du Cuvé
MALOLACTIC FERMENTATION	100%
FERMENTED & AGED	Combination of 14 American & European oak barriques - 30% new
TECHNICAL INFORMATION	Alcohol 14.1% TA 5.23 g/L pH 3.41 Residual Sugar <1.0 g/L
FOOD MATCH	Perfect with seafood, scallops and crayfish
CELLARING	Careful cellaring will reward in 5-10 years



Bill and Denis Irwin, circa 1975

A TRIBUTE TO THE FOUNDERS OF MATAWHERO

Our flagship Irwin Chardonnay is a tribute to the late Bill Irwin and his son Denis, the founders of Matawhero. Bill is considered the father of modern viticulture in New Zealand and imported new grape varieties including Mendoza Chardonnay into New Zealand in the late 1960s. He was corresponding with viticultural leaders in Europe, Australia and the United States and was responsible for the importation of virus-free root stock.

During the 1970s and 80s, Denis scooped numerous New Zealand wine awards with his Gewürztraminer and Chardonnay, and had the enterprise to enter international wine competitions when no one else was. Denis reflects, "We were really radical for back then. There was almost a superstar element to it as we were entertaining prime ministers and international wine critics. But behind-the-scenes the life we were living was actually a continuation of my father's hard working days."

Matawhero



CHARDONNAY
GISBORNE

2017
VINTAGE

WINE OF NEW ZEALAND

"Sometimes I reflect on what Dad did for the New Zealand grape growers and I am incredulous. His drive and determination gave the vineyards of the 1970s, and as a result the country's wine industry, a strong base from which to flourish"

Denis Irwin, 2017

IRWIN 2017 CHARDONNAY

In an exceptional vintage, where superior ripeness is achieved, we hand craft this limited release barrel fermented style of Gisborne Chardonnay.

Harvested in the cool of the morning, the fruit for this wine achieved superb ripeness after another warm season in Gisborne. The grapes were gently pressed and slightly clarified prior to fermentation. The juice was then inoculated with the indigenous yeast from the vineyard using a technique called Pied du Cuvé. Here we pick a small parcel of grapes and crush prior to the full harvest and allow them to ferment on the skins. We then add these back into the juice to ferment the full parcel. This gives us a true expression and terroir of the vineyard and provides layers of flavour and aroma complexity, as well as wonderful palate texture.

Fermentation in a mixture of American and Hungarian oak barriques ensures a perfect integration of oak character and full malolactic fermentation adds richness and length. The wine is sur lie for 10 months before careful fining and bottling.



THE VINEYARD

Our flagship Irwin Chardonnay is made from 100% Mendoza Chardonnay grapes from the famous Tietjen vineyard on the Golden Slopes in Gisborne. This site has a rich history in producing award-winning Chardonnays for over 20 years.

This narrow 10km strip is made up of small parcels of elevated sloping land. Medium to heavy Kaiti clay base material is overlaid with 20-30cm of light black topsoil, with influences from the limestone foothills. These conditions allow vines to grow with a balance suited to super-premium wine making.

Here we target low yielding vines, the grapes are leaf plucked by hand for ultimate sun exposure and the crop reduced to 6 tonnes per hectare to increase the intensity of the flavour in the wine.

VARIETY	Chardonnay
CLONE	Mendoza
AREA	1.765 hectares
ROOTSTOCK	Riparia Gloire
VINES PLANTED	2013
CROPPING REGIME	6 tonnes per hectare
PLANTING DENSITY	1274 plants per hectare
EXPOSITION	NNE
TERROIR	Kaiti heavy silt loam
ALTITUDE	10m elevation
GPS	38°36'13"S 177°58'44"E
SLOPE	2%