

PEGASUS BAY

FINE WAIPARA WINE



BEL CANTO Dry Riesling 2008

TASTING NOTE



The spring and early summer were warm and so exceptionally dry that we felt the vines might suffer from the effects of drought. In February we had the unexpected; a torrential downpour set the dry streams gurgling merrily and totally replenished the ground water reserves. Late in autumn we had humid conditions which led to some botrytis developing in riesling. Many producers picked early to minimise the effect of this but fortunately we braved it out until the weather cleared and the patches of botrytis became beautifully shrivelled and noble.

This fruit came from our oldest vines in a part of the vineyard on its own roots. We selected the most golden bunches which had been exposed to the sun and which had a portion of beautifully clean noble-botrytis. Our aim with BEL CANTO (beautiful singing) is to use late harvest partially botrytic fruit, similar to that which we select for our ARIA (operatic solo song), but to craft a dry wine of great extract, fullness and complexity. This is in contrast to ARIA's elegance, purity and lingering sweetness.

In keeping with these goals, the wine was made in quite a different way from ARIA, with some of the juice being left unclarified. It was then fermented by indigenous "wild" yeasts and matured in old barrels. We handled the wine very gently throughout to retain some of its natural carbon dioxide to give it a touch of spritzig.

The wine shows bright citrus flavours with characters of lemons, limes and oranges, supported by hints of nectarines and white fleshed peaches. These interplay with impressions of passionfruit, tropical spices and Turkish musk. It expands in the mouth to become full bodied and concentrated. This wine is big boned, taut and muscley, with a spine of natural acidity and minerality which extends the palate into a dry, firm grapefruity finish.

While ready to drink on release it will improve with careful cellaring but drinking is expected to be at its best within 3-4 years.

Wine is a natural health food