

TASTING NOTE

PEGASUS BAY



MERLOT
CABERNET
2003

14% Vol

e750ml

PRODUCED & BOTTLED BY DONALDSON FAMILY LTD
WAIPARA CANTERBURY NEW ZEALAND

MERLOT CABERNET 2003

Cold weather in early summer during the vines period of flowering resulted in low crop levels. This has given the wine extra concentration. The rest of the summer was warm, as was the autumn, which was long and dry. The fruit ripened perfectly and was in optimum condition when picked.

After harvest, the individual varieties from which this wine is made, namely merlot, cabernet sauvignon, malbec and cabernet franc, were fermented separately in vats. This was carried out in the traditional manner used to make Bordeaux Claret, with the fermenting juice being regularly drained from the bottom of each vat and aerated by splashing before being sprayed over the top of the vat to extract colour and tannin and to prevent the floating cap of grape skins drying out. When the fermentation

died down the grapes were left with the wine in the vats for a variable period of maceration, the length of this being determined by regular tasting. Subsequently, the individual varieties were matured separately for 18 months in oak barriques, 30% of which were new. In the spring after harvest, when the weather warmed, the wine underwent natural malo-lactic fermentation by the action of its indigenous micro-organisms. During maturation each barrique was racked four to six times by carefully removing it from any sediment which had formed. This enabled it to fully clarify prior to careful blending of the individual varieties and bottling,

The wine has a deep colour and has a bright carmine and ruby hue. The merlot has given it a plump mouth-filling fruitiness, reminiscent of blackberries, raspberries and black plums. The cabernet sauvignon has added wild black-currant hints and provided a backbone of firm, ripe tannins, which will help it age. Broader, mouth-filling tannins come from the malbec, which also adds a rose-petal fragrance. Lifted ethereal aromatics and elegance are a hallmark of cabernet franc. These separate elements combine in the wine and help it linger on the palate well after swallowing. While ready to drink on release, it should improve with careful cellaring over the next four to five years and live well beyond.

Wine is a natural health food.

DONALDSON FAMILY LTD, STOCKGROVE RD, R.D. 2 AMBERLEY, NEW ZEALAND
PHONE 03 314-6869 FAX 03 314-6861 MOBILE (021) 374 424 info@pegasusbay.com