

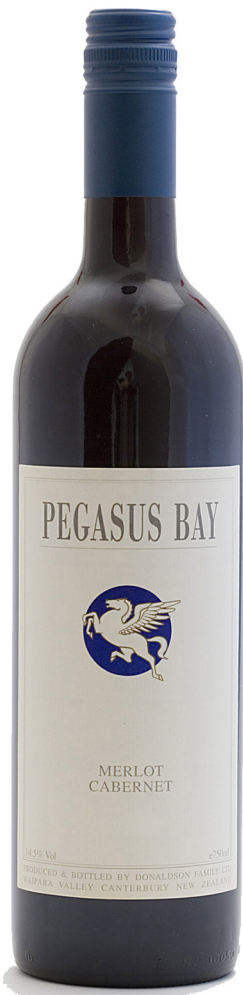
PEGASUS BAY

FINE WAIPARA WINE



Merlot Cabernet 2005

TASTING NOTE



The vineyard experienced a cool, wet December when the vines were in flower, which resulted in poor pollination and a very low crop. The rest of the summer was very good and the autumn warm and dry. Leaves were removed in the fruiting zone early in the season to allow the bunches to be fully exposed to the sun to aid their ripening. We were thus able to harvest fully mature, healthy fruit and the low yield has given the wine extra concentration and depth.

After picking the grapes were carefully hand selected so that only the best were used. These were fermented in vats in the traditional Bordeaux manner with the developing wine being drained from the bottom of the tanks, aerated by splashing and then being pumped back over the floating cap of the skins, to keep them moist. Following fermentation, the new wine was kept in contact with remnants of the grapes, the exact duration of which was determined by tasting each vat daily. When it was felt to be optimal, the wine was removed and put into oak barriques, 30% of which were new. In the spring after harvest, when the barrel cellar began to warm, the wine underwent spontaneous malo-lactic fermentation by the action of its own indigenous micro-organisms. It remained in these barriques for a period of 2 years, during which time 3-4 rackings were carried out so that it achieved clarity without filtration.

We have 6 clones of merlot, 3 of malbec, 2 of cabernet sauvignon and 1 of cabernet franc in our vineyard, which has helped give the wine extra complexity and integration. Merlot provides a purple plum fruit character, a plump fleshy structure and a backbone of ripe tannins. Malbec supports this and adds an aromatic rose-petal-like element.

Cassis and blackcurrant impressions come from the cabernet sauvignon, while cabernet franc gives an ethereal fruitiness. Underlying and integrating these are savoury nuances suggestive of black olives, coffee beans, cigar smoke and dark chocolate. While it is a big, muscular, mouth-filling wine it has a refined palate structure with velvety tannins and a lingering flavoursome finish.

It is ready to drink on release but careful cellaring should bring out additional layers of complexity and interest.

Wine is a natural health food