

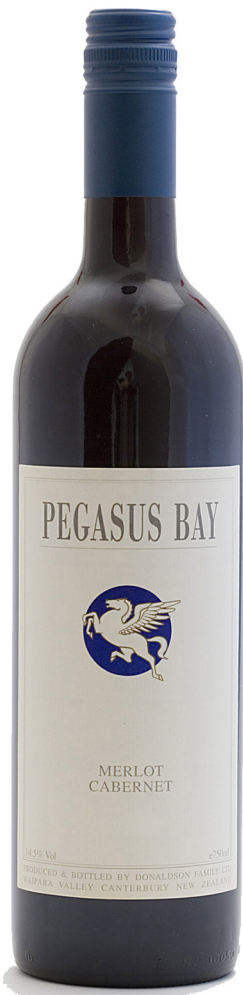
# PEGASUS BAY

FINE WAIPARA WINE



## Merlot Cabernet 2006

### TASTING NOTE



This was a very balanced and even growing season without extremes. Mild spring weather resulted in early bud burst. There was good accumulation of summer heat and a long, dry autumn. As we did not harvest the fruit until May it had plenty of time to become physiologically ripe with a good balance of sugars, acid and tannins.

After picking, the fruit was put into stainless steel tanks and fermented using the techniques which have made Bordeaux red wines or *Claret* so famous. During fermentation, the raised vats were regularly drained by allowing the evolving wine to splash under the influence of gravity, into an open container to naturally aerate it. It was then sprayed back over the floating *cap* of grape skins to help keep them moist and healthy. When the fermentation stopped, the tanks were sealed and the mixture was allowed a period of *post-fermentation maceration*, the exact duration of which was determined by daily tasting. The wine was then separated from the grape remnants, and put into oak barriques.

When the winery warmed in the summer after harvest the wine underwent spontaneous secondary (malolactic) fermentation by the action of its own indigenous micro-organisms. It remained in the oak barriques for a total of 2 years. Over this time it received several rackings to help it clarify. The final *assemblage* was then made by carefully blending the multiple batches in exact proportion, according to taste. Numerous blind taste tests were carried out by our winemakers.

The wine has a deep, ruby colour. The merlot has provided purple plum flavours and a plump, fleshy, mid-palate structure. Cassis elements and a backbone of mouth-filling, ripe tannins come from the cabernet sauvignon. Small portions of cabernet franc and malbec donate an ethereal, lifted bouquet, the latter giving a whiff of rose petals, as well as filling out the structure and adding to its length. It is a big, dense, chewy wine, which expands in the mouth and has a lingering, spicy after-taste. While ready to drink on release it should become increasingly mellow and plump with careful cellaring and show a range of additional bottle-age complexities.

***Wine in moderation is a natural health food***