

KEEPERS OF THE FLAME

2022 Chardonnay

This distinctive parcel of chardonnay was identified early in the growing season. Like the previous years Keepers of the Flame, it came from our Cottage Vineyard, utilising the new 548 chardonnay clones that were planted. Our latest evolution of the Keepers of the Flame style highlights the exceptional quality of not only the fruit, but also this iconic Hunter Valley vineyard.

TASTING NOTES

COLOUR: Pale straw with green hues.

NOSE: Citrus blossom, green apple and a touch of smokey sulfides.

PALATE: Complex textures of full solids natural ferment, lemon pith with grapefruit and layers of white stone fruit, finishing with a pebble stone drying acid.

VINEYARD: The Cottage Vineyard.

SOIL: Sandy loam over dense clay.

OAK: 100% new French oak, 2 x puncheons and 5 x barriques.

VINTAGE CONDITIONS

Vintage 2022 was a challenging season, with significant rainfall and above average crops as the vines continued to recover from multiple seasons of drought. Winter 2021 was mild and we saw budburst begin on time, while flowering and veraison were somewhat delayed with cool conditions from spring into summer. Significant rainfall in November and December coupled with cool, overcast days helped the fruit retain good pH and acid levels as it started to ripen.

Vintage started at what would have been considered normal timing 15 years ago. Thankfully, dry and mild weather was the standard through January which saw fruit staying on the vine and ensured full flavour development. Riper Chardonnays and Semillons are looking fantastic from the 2022 vintage with excellent flavour and texture.

WINEMAKING

This was the last parcel of chardonnay picked in the season. Purely free run juice, drained into barrels, with a natural wild yeast ferment. The cooler vintage conditions meant that the fruit held its naturally higher acidity. Around two thirds of the barrels used in the final blend went naturally through malolactic fermentation, which gives this wine an added layer of texture on the nose and creaminess. The wine spent 10 months in new French oak barriques and puncheons.



TECHNICAL DATA

ALCOHOL: 13%

pH: 3.38

TA: 6.9