

2016 The Wrekin Vineyard Chenin Blanc

Astrolabe, Marlborough, New Zealand

Product details

Vintage:	2016	Drinking:	
Producer:	Astrolabe	Alcohol:	
Region:	Marlborough	Variety:	Chenin blanc
Country:	New Zealand		

About the producer

ASTROLABE WINES

Simon Waghorn's winemaking career began in South Australia in 1982. He worked in New Zealand's North Island, in Te Kauwhata and Gisborne, before settling in Marlborough, on the northern coast of South Island. It is this spirit of exploration that led to the foundation of Astrolabe in 1996 with his wife Jane Forrest-Waghorn and friends Paul Davenport and Sally Lewis.

The navigationally and astronomically inclined name of the winemaker comes from that of the ship L'Astrolabe, sailed by French explorer Jules Dumont d'Urville, who charted the sounds, coves and islands of the region in 1827. He was not the first European voyager to discover this beautiful part of the islands, but his thorough geographical, geological and biological research was more in-depth than that of predecessors such as Cook, and led to a greater understanding of the region.

It is that same spirit of discovery in detail that drives the Astrolabe winery team. Marlborough is well known for its dry, cool climate and topography that makes it ideal for producing aromatic white wines (particularly from Sauvignon Blanc) and Pinot Noir. However, Simon is particularly interested in exploring the distinctive qualities of the sub-regions of Marlborough - Awatere Valley, Wairau Valley and the Kekerengu Coast. This understanding is applied to balancing single-grape blends - Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Gris, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir - under Astrolabe's Province wines, as well as to its Valley series.

Marlborough's best known terroir, Wairau Valley - warm and dry, protected from harsh weather by the Wither Hills but tempered by cool breezes from Cloudy Bay, with big changes in temperature from day to night - has huge variation in soil. It's known for its herbal, gooseberryish Sauvignon Blancs but is also good terroir for Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. To the south-east, Awatare Valley, is more rugged and challenging ground, with a stronger ocean influence and dry soil that stresses the vines - punchy, grassy notes come through in its Sauvignon Blancs and Pinot Noirs. The Kekerengu Coast is Marlborough's newest sub-region and is the secret weapon in Astrolabe's campaign to produce subtle wines that age gracefully like a Burgundy or Chablis.

An even more precise expression of terroir is found in Astrolabe's single vineyard range - completing the European appellation model. Astrolabe wines are sourced from individual Marlborough sites, each chosen for the distinctive flavour it produces either in isolation or adding layers of complexity to Valley or Province wines.

Astrolabe wines demonstrate Waghorn's innovative treatment of specific parcels, experimenting with the winemaking process to capture undiscovered qualities of individual grape varieties. The Wrekin Chenin Blanc from the Wairu Valley is an excellent example - big and honeyed on the nose, giving away to crisp apple, lemon



and a mineral length on the palate. Taihoa Sauvignon Blanc - from grapes hand-picked from a plot on the Kekerengu Coast, whole-bunch pressed and fermented with wild yeast in aged oak - is another example. Compared to many Marlborough Sauvignon Blancs, it has a herbal savoury character similar to a Sancerre, with a citric acid backbone that promises long ageing.

The Waghorns' approach as winemakers is to build relationships both with people and the natural environment. They work closely with dedicated growers who live on their land and understand its rhythms, know how to grow grapes that express the terroir. Astrolabe wine is a part of the Sustainable Winegrowing New Zealand programme and all aspects of its production is certified - not only the vinification and bottling, but every single vineyard supplying grapes too. Armit Wines is pleased to have joined the Astrolabe family recently - in 2016 - as exclusive distributor for the UK.

Armit Wines also exclusively imports Simon's second wine, Durvillea. It is named after the tenacious seaweed (samples of which were first collected by Jules Dumont d'Urville) that clings to rocks along the coast of Marlborough. Grapes for Durvillea wines are grown at carefully selected sites across the region and harvested at precisely the right moment to preserve purity and intensity of flavour for a classic Marlborough style of Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Gris and Pinot Noir.

Browse and buy Astrolabe wine online today.