



## CHURCH ROAD

### Church Road Reserve Chardonnay 2006

*Church Road Chardonnay's have undergone a quiet evolution in the last few years, tending away from what we would call the 'old fashioned new world' style with lashings of opulent tropical fruit and oak, to something far more serious and complex.*

*Still with the power and concentration that comes from low cropping Hawkes Bay fruit, our Chardonnay winemaking has tended toward gentle, traditional old world handling which emphasises minerality, complexity and elegance. The Reserve Chardonnay is a selection of our very best Chardonnay blocks, hand harvested and sorted off the vine, then whole bunch pressed straight to our best French oak barrels where wild fermentation is allowed to proceed naturally. The wine is then allowed to mature in the barrel for 14 months with full yeast lees contact before racking and blending the following winter.*

Chris Scott: Winemaker

#### **Introduction:**

Church Road Reserve Chardonnay has long been respected as one of New Zealand's finest examples of this variety, and continues to be recognised as such, with both the 2004 and 2005 vintage winning trophies in major national wine competitions. The 2006 release is our best Reserve Chardonnay to date and sets a new benchmark for future vintages.

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## Technical Specifications:

### Growing Season Climate Data (Sept-April)

Hawkes Bay 2006 growing season	
Growing Degree Days:	1418°C 2584°F
Rainfall:	581mm 12.9 inches
Mean January Temp:	18.5°C 65.3°F
Pruning Regime:	2 cane VSP
Harvest Date:	14 – 19 March

### Maturity Analysis at Harvest (average)

°Brix:	23.7 – 24.9 °Brix
Titrateable Acidity (as Tartaric Acid)	6 - 8.5 g/L
pH:	3.24 - 3.33

### Wine Analysis

Alcohol:	14 % v/v
Residual Sugar:	<1 g/L
Titrateable Acidity (as Tartaric Acid)	5.85 g/L
pH:	3.48

## 2006 Growing Season:

The hallmark of the 2006 Growing season was the warm summer and autumn, which allowed fruit to reach a good level of flavour maturity. All of the Reserve Chardonnay harvest was completed in ideal harvest conditions, at least one week earlier than in other recent vintages before any autumn rain.

## Soil Type:

Our best chardonnay comes from moderate vigour soils in river valleys, in close proximity to Calcareous hillsides. River sediments provide greater or lesser proportions of silt, sand and gravel, while outwash from the hillsides introduces a portion of calcareous clay.

Korokipo Vineyard (54%): Deep Alluvial silt based soils with a higher proportion of sand towards the Ngaruroro River and a higher proportion of clay closer to the hills....

Omaranui Vineyard (20%): Moderately shallow silt and clay over gravel in the Tutaikuri River Valley

Brooklands Vineyard (26%): Moderately shallow silt and clay over gravel.

## Clonal / Rootstock Selection:

Clone 15 (45%): Develops intense flavour early on with good natural acidity

Clone 95 (46%): Develops ripe subtle flavours early on, with lower acidity and low phenolics, giving supple, creamy textured wines

Mendoza (9%): Ripens later tending more toward citrus flavours, and has a more grainy palate texture, with higher acidity. Useful for keeping a blend in balance in regard to acidity.

All grown on low vigour rootstock

## Winemaking Details:

With Chardonnay it seems the less we do, the better it is. After meticulous fruit selection and hand harvesting, grapes are gently whole bunch pressed, and filled straight to our best French oak barrels without any prior settling or clarification. Cloudy juice promotes minerality and texture, stops the fruit from becoming simple, and the oak becoming obvious. There are no fining treatments or additions made to the juice, and we encourage a degree of natural oxidation which helps produce more age-worthy wine. Once in the barrel, the

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juice is allowed to commence a wild fermentation as the natural occurring yeast from the vineyard and the winery build up a population in the juice. Wild fermentation gives subtle complexity, increased texture and better oak integration when compared to inoculating with commercially available yeast strains. The wine is then allowed to undergo malolactic fermentation to naturally balance the acidity. Again most of this occurs spontaneously, without inoculation. These days we have a much better understanding of this traditional process, and can benefit from positive texture elements and complexity, without any overt buttery notes. The wines then remain in the barrels on full yeast lees.

### **Oak Regime:**

100% French oak barriques, 58% new, balance one year old

Barrels are selected on their ability to add and structure savoury complexity to the wine, rather than appearing obviously woody.

Fermented and aged in barrels for a total of 14 months.

### **Aroma and Palate:**

A core of ripe peach, fig and hazelnut is overlaid with a mealy complexity from yeast lees contact and savoury integrated oak. The palate is rich and full, but with a seam of minerality that adds length and balance.

### **Cellaring and Food Matching:**

Good Chardonnay is rich and textural, yet well balanced, with subtle but complex flavours. It works well with dishes that are likewise textural, rich yet subtle rather than overt in flavour and aroma. Oily fish such as salmon and seafood such as scallops or crayfish are obvious matches, this wine will also work well with butter or cream sauces, balanced by acid elements such as lemon juice or verjus. Serve at cellar temperature (10-12 deg C).

While this wine is excellent drinking now, careful cellaring for 6 years will lead to increased richness and mouthfeel, while fruit will give way to appealing hazelnut aromas.

### **Church Road Reserve Range:**

Church Road Reserve wines are produced only in great vintages. The very best low cropping vineyard blocks are targeted for selective hand harvesting to give wines with the greatest possible flavour, depth and concentration. In the Winery these wines are made using small batch, traditional winemaking techniques that emphasise texture, structure and subtle complexity, while still letting the fruit to shine through.