

CHURCH ROAD™

— RESERVE —

“From the warm 2008 vintage, this wine expresses our continuing evolution of the Bordeaux red wine style. The Bordeaux blend is one of the most challenging and exciting wine styles to produce. There is a synergy between Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot that when blended sensitively, produces arguably the most complete, complex, fragrant and satisfying style of red wine in the world. Over the last few years we have sourced more and more fruit from the warm, low-vigour soils of the south western Heretaunga Plains, in particular in the Gimblett Gravels and Red Metal Triangle sub regions of Hawke’s Bay. The warm meso-climates and light, stony soils give low crops of concentrated, fully ripe, fragrant fruit that produces classically-structured wines with power, elegance, fragrance and finesse.”

Chris Scott, Winemaker

Church Road has been producing Bordeaux-style red blends from Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon since 1990. Advances in viticulture over this time and an association with the highly-respected Bordeaux producer, Domaines Cordier, coupled with knowledge of local grape-growing conditions have culminated in our best release to date of this award-winning wine. Our Reserve Bordeaux Blend may be Cabernet Sauvignon or Merlot dominant, dependant on the vintage, but is only made in the very best years. It is always blended from hand-harvested fruit selected from only the best low-vigour vineyard blocks.



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

GROWING SEASON CLIMATE DATA (Sept-Apr)

HAWKE'S BAY AVERAGES	
GROWING DEGREE DAYS:	1384°C
RAINFALL:	331mm
MEAN MAX TEMP:	20.7°C
MEAN MIN TEMP:	11.5°C
PRUNING REGIME:	2-cane VSP
HARVEST DATE:	20-21 March

MATURITY ANALYSIS AT HARVEST (Average)

*BRIX:	23.2°Bx
TITRATABLE ACIDITY: (as Tartaric Acid)	6.0g/l
pH:	3.40

WINE ANALYSIS

ALCOHOL:	14.0% v/v
RESIDUAL SUGAR:	<1.0g/l
TITRATABLE ACIDITY: (as Tartaric Acid)	5.4g/l
pH:	3.57



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THE 2008 GROWING SEASON

The 2008 growing season was characterised by a very warm, dry summer and early Autumn. By April, the weather had started to cool, but conditions remained generally dry allowing us to hang fruit until a good level of ripeness was achieved. The warm weather early on meant good flavour and texture ripeness was achieved at relatively low brix, providing wines with great alcohol balance.

SOIL TYPE

Gimblett Gravels: Very recent alluvial greywacke gravels interspersed with varying levels of silt and sand, these warm soils are extremely infertile and free draining, allowing precise control over vine vigour and resultant fruit quality.

CLONAL/ROOTSTOCK SELECTION

Merlot (86%): BDX clone 181 and 2096
Cabernet Sauvignon (12%): Pask Selection
Petit Verdot (2%)

All grown on low-vigour rootstock.

WINEMAKING DETAILS

After identifying the best blocks from our vineyards, the fruit is hand harvested and hand sorted. In blocks where vine variability is an issue, only the lowest-vigour vines are selected. The fruit is fully destemmed and crushed straight into one of our 70-year-old concrete vats, stainless steel open tops or French oak cuves. This allows us to keep the different varieties and vineyard blocks separate, giving us the maximum number of blending options. The ferments reach temperatures of about 30°C and typically last about 5 days; the wines are allowed to spend between 4 and 5 weeks on skins (determined by daily tasting) before being drained and pressed. Press wine is tasted and blended back if it offers a positive contribution. The new wine is allowed to settle for about 2 days before filling to 225L oak barriques, where it undergoes malolactic fermentation to reduce acidity. To retain the full weight and flavour of the wine, it was not fined or filtered. As a result, some precipitation may occur with time and decanting is recommended.

OAK REGIME

The wine was filled to new and one-year-old French oak barriques. Approximately 50% of the blend is aged in new oak, imparting subtle toasted cocoa bean, spice and cedar aromas. We trial and taste a range of barrel types every year and only the best barrels are selected for ongoing use. Barrels are selected on their ability to add structure and subtle complexity to the wine without appearing overtly woody.

The wine was blended after 16 months in barrel, then returned to oak for a harmonisation phase. Total maturation time was 22 months in barrel, during which time each wine was 'racked and returned' several times. This process leaves any sediment behind in the barrel, giving a natural clarification process, and allows for periodic aeration to aid the development of supple tannins.

AROMA AND PALATE

A complex array of rich plum and dark berry fruits with subtle spice, sandalwood and violet aromas are complemented by earthy, savoury undertones derived from barrel maturation and a traditional, Old World approach to winemaking. On the palate, the wine is rich yet dry and elegant with a backbone of fine, ripe tannins. This is a serious, multidimensional wine in a classic Bordeaux style.

CELLARING AND FOOD MATCHING

Good Bordeaux blends are the most complete and satisfying of red wines. They should combine a depth and density of rich fruit and earthy complexity, but also exhibit a lighter, more lifted fragrance. They should also demonstrate power on the palate, yet never be heavy or cloying and should finish long and dry, but not aggressive. These wines are the ultimate match for savoury game and red meat dishes but also experiment with stronger-style hard and blue cheeses, rich and oily fish dishes and antipasto with cold cuts and olives. If designing a meal to match this wine, think savoury and avoid any overtly sweet sauces. While this wine is excellent drinking now, careful cellaring for 10 years or more will lead to increased suppleness and complexity. Serve at approximately 18°C.

The 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 shine through.

