

The Golden Mile  
Domaine Georges Michel

Georges Michel: When we came here in '98, we decided to establish our vineyard on the ... a small micro-region in the Marlborough called the Golden Mile, which was proven to be the best place in this region to grow our consistent fruit quality. It was here that there was no frost, and it was recognized to be the best Wairau and the best microclimate for the grapes. That's why we have called our first range of wine the Golden Mile range.

Grapes from the Golden Mile have all the characteristic and special flavors of this Marlborough region in term of freshness and tropical fruit flavors.

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Ron McFarland: We are going to visit with Julie from Domaine Georges Michel, and she is going to tell us a little bit about the three Golden Mile wines, Domaine Georges Michel Pinot, Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc. So let's start with the Pinot Noir, okay?

Julie Yonge: This is the lighter of our two Pinot Noirs. It's goes into open fermenters for a week, and then it's raked off into two-year-old oak barrels for nine months. It's very fruit-intensive with a hint of smokiness to it. It's a light ... a fairly light Pinot Noir. It's designed pretty much as an easy drinking Pinot Noir, not necessarily as a food wine; very light ...

Ron McFarland: Pretty nose.

Julie Yonge: ... good barbecue wine, very fruity, hint of smokiness to it. When it is very hot in here, we can chill it down slightly and it handles it well.

Ron McFarland: It would certainly go well with a lot foods.

Julie Yonge: Yes.

Ron McFarland: I think you could even serve this with white fish.

Julie Yonge: You could, yeah, particularly with salmon.

Ron McFarland: Yeah, salmon and halibut or swordfish

Julie Yonge: With a slightly stronger fish, so it is ...

Ron McFarland: So that's fantastic.

Julie Yonge: ... very good.

Ron McFarland: All right. We'll try the Golden Mile Chardonnay.

Julie Yonge: The Chardonnay is a very fruit-driven in style Chardonnay. I have people saying, you know, in a blind tasting you might mistake it for a Sauvignon Blanc. You can definitely taste the Chardonnay fruit. It's very fruity on the nose, fruit salad almost; it's got a hit of spiciness to it, very well-balanced. It does go into oak after stainless fermentation. It goes into one- and two-year-old oak barrels; very, very well-balanced, well-structured; almost a Chardonnay for non-Chardonnay drinkers, actually.

Ron McFarland: I think that's just because the quality of the fruit is not being dominated by the oak  
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