

Vineyards at Bannock Brae Estate

Crawford Brown: Hello, Crawford Brown again, Bannock Brae Estate. I just thought I'd mention that 10 years when Catherine and I bought this bare piece of land, we decided right from the very beginning that to make the best and most stunning wines, we needed to put a lot of effort into choosing things carefully right at the beginning, because you only get one chance at it. It was an easy decision that we should grow Pinot Noir in this fantastic area. So that just took about 20 seconds to decide. Then we had to decide what sort of clones to grow and how many. Because of our relatively small size with just 16,000 vines, we made a decision to have three clones; and if you're interested, two of them UCD, University of California at Davis, Clones 5 and 6, and a Burgundy clone, Dijon 115. These three clones together, we believe, give us the complexity that we are looking for in our wine, and fortunately a lot of judges and wine writers would agree with that.

Now, it's a very true saying that excellent wine is produced in the vineyard, not in the winery, and I guess that's never more true than for the wine that we call Pinot Noir. So it's just an important decision for us to make -- that everything we do here is aimed towards the ... delivering the perfect fruit to the vineyard. Our entire philosophy is not a cost-based one, it's a value-based one. Some people raise their eyebrows when I mention that, especially accountants; but that's the way we think it has to be: we are after value, not cost.

Now, a result of all that is that when we come pick our grapes and they are taken to the winery, all the winemaker has to do is to transform that, those berries, into a beverage which is bottled and we call wine. It's very important that the winemaker interferes to the very least extent possible in that process, especially for Pinot Noir. So one of the results of that is that with the quality of fruit that we are able to deliver to the winery, we have discovered that it is no longer necessary to fine our wine; so we do not use finings, there is no egg whites or fish bladders added to our wine in order to clarify it, and in good years we don't even filter the wine. The result of that, of course, is in years to come, there will be slight deposit in the bottle; but as aficionados know, that's the whole mark of a great wine.

So that's our philosophy: value, not cost, and excellence above everything. Thank you.

Ron@NewZealandFoodWines.com 720 233 5565

Ron McFarland 221 South Garfileld Street #209 Denver Colorado 80209

