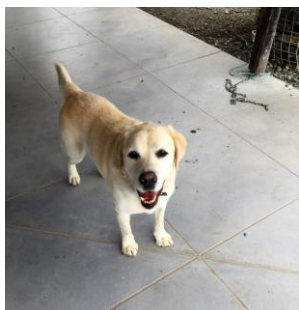


FROM THE CELLAR... DOG POINT VINEYARD

YOU HAVE TO VISIT OUR WINERY BECAUSE...

“Dog Point is situated in beautiful Marlborough, New Zealand’s best kept secret!”

Margaret Sutherland, Co-owner, Dog Point Vineyard



Dog Point winery (top), Pressilla, the Enigmatic Red Lady, who oversees the operation (middle), and Monty, the welcoming committee (bottom).

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

March 13, 2019

When we first arrived at Dog Point, we weren't sure if we had the right location, despite what our GPS said. After looking around for a while, the only thing denoting the estate's existence came in the form of a miniscule sign nestled under some trees. We since came to learn this was done by design, as the winery only receives visitors by appointment.

As we ventured further into the estate, we happened upon a working area abuzz with activity. The first grapes of the 2019 vintage were starting to come in, literally, supervised by Pressilla, the Enigmatic Red Lady, who watched from her perch high above.

Several staff members approached us, including Monty, one of Dog Point's faithful canines, asking if they could offer some assistance (we think Monty just wanted to say hello). For us, this warm welcome epitomized the estate.

THE LAY OF THE LAND

Although Dog Point produced its first vintage in 2002, the vineyard has been involved in wine production since 1979, making it one of the first in the Marlborough region.

The name, Dog Point, refers to the earliest European settlement of Marlborough, when sheep farming was the main land use. Some of the shepherds' dogs wandered off and formed a marauding pack that worried sheep. These dogs made their home on the original scrub and tussock covered hills that became known as Dog Point. The dogs were eventually caught but the name lives on!

Dog Point itself produces around 60,000 cases of wine annually from a very capable team spanning two generations of family. The estate also produces extra virgin olive oil from fruit grown on the spectacular property, and it boasts an organic vegetable garden and pine nut trees. The property also has an extensive area of native plants that line Mill Stream as it meanders through the grounds.



Depending on the time of year, you might see upwards of 3,000 sheep roaming the property, doing their part under the guise of “vineyard maintenance,” mowing and fertilising as they go. You might also catch a glimpse of Pressilla, the Enigmatic Red Lady mentioned above. From what we learned, she likes to keep her eye on things.

Dog Point is proud of their certified organic status, a distinction earned under the BioGro New Zealand Programme.



A view from one of the Dog Point vineyards.

WINEMAKING PHILOSOPHY

Dog Point strives to produce top quality wines using a combination of organic practices, hand-picking, low cropping, and gravity-based production techniques. The dedicated, hard-working staff do their utmost to respect the land from which the grapes grow while putting their own experience and passion into the finished products. The results speak for themselves.

“We believe in organic wine growing techniques that provide a healthy living and working environment for our family and staff.” – Margaret Sutherland, Co-owner, Dog Point

ONE-ON-ONE WITH MARGARET SUTHERLAND, CO-OWNER, DOG POINT VINEYARD

It’s not every day that you get to taste wines under the tutelage of a winery owner, but we experienced exactly that. Margaret took her time with our group, explaining the estate’s winemaking philosophy, as well as the subtleties of each offering, sharing her knowledge in an informative, engaging, and down-to-earth manner.

Q: What do you like most about wine?

A: In the right place at the right time it is the most satisfying drink, adding conviviality to any occasion.



Margaret doing what she does best.

Q: Of all the wines you produce, which one is your favourite and why?

A: We aim to make wine in a style we enjoy drinking ourselves, so to favour one would be unfair.

Q: What is your ultimate favourite wine and why?

A: The wine I enjoy whilst preparing dinner in the evening.

Q: What’s the best part of your job?

A: Seeing Dog Point wine being enjoyed knowing we’ve nurtured it from vine to bottle.

Q: What's the worst part of your job?

A: Knowing what to wear for a day that presents in so many different ways (from office to winery, from tasting room to vineyard).

Q: What is your most embarrassing wine moment?

A: A total set-up by friends in a wine options, that I'm not prepared to share!

Q: Tell us one thing about you or your winery nobody else knows.

A: Just quietly, we have the largest organic vineyard in New Zealand.



Dog Point's 2018 Pinot Noir maturing in barrel.

THE TASTING...

We had the good fortune to taste four of Dog Point's offerings. True to the essence of the estate, it happened in the kitchen, as many good things do.

We began with the 2018 Sauvignon Blanc (price: \$25 NZD) and ended with the 2016 Pinot Noir (price: \$45 NZD).

In between, we tasted the:

- 2015 Section 94 Sauvignon Blanc, (price: \$35 NZD)
- 2016 Chardonnay (price: \$35 NZD)

We enjoyed all the wines, but the 2016 Pinot Noir came up tops. Pale-medium ruby in colour, this red offered red cherries, red licorice, blueberries, roses, graphite, and some oak notes in the nose. In the mouth the Pinot Noir served up high acidity, light-medium tannins, and more red cherries, blueberries, and graphite flavours. We also enjoyed earthy notes, as well as a hint of blackcurrant leaf, which continued in the lengthy finish. We could see this wine pairing beautifully with venison, duck and lamb. We could also see ourselves enjoying it on its own.

FINAL NOTES

We had an amazing time at Dog Point and learned a great deal about the estate and the fruits of its labour, as well as the greater Marlborough region. Margaret treated us to the warm, embracing hospitality you'd expect from a family-oriented estate. If you're looking for a first-class winery to visit, we'd highly recommend you seek out Dog Point. Just make sure to book ahead because visits are by appointment only.

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