



SAILOR SEEKS HORSE

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Sailor Seeks Horse 2020 Chardonnay

Winemaker: Gilli & Paul Lipscombe

Grape(s): Chardonnay

GI: Tasmania

Site(s): Estate Vineyard, Huon Valley

Vintage notes: After the Huon's bushfires of 2019, the 2020 was the opposite end of the spectrum. It felt more like a perennial spring and then a quick segue into autumn: they never quite got the warm bit in the middle. Luckily, or unluckily depending on your viewpoint, yields were minuscule and so didn't need a warm summer to get over the proverbial line. Low yields were also a blessing as the COVID-19 pandemic depleted the country of pickers. As the Lipscombes say: "A year of challenges for everyone but sometimes there's a silver lining and we feel our 2020s display the characters of a cooler harvest and tiny yields. Intensity, purity and delicacy."

Vineyard notes: Planted in 2005, the 6.5ha site was abandoned for several years by its original owners before being resuscitated by the Lipscombes. The site had a lot of potential: NE-facing slope, frost free(ish) and well drained sandy-loam soil over clay. After some replanting, the vineyard is now composed of 2 hectares of chardonnay (Dijon clones 277, 76, 95 and 96), with the rest of the vineyard made up of the pinot noir clones 114, 115, MV6, 777, 2051 (D5V12) and 8048 (D2V6). Everything is planted at a density of 4000 vines/ha, which seems about right for the soil capacity. 700mm or so of average annual rainfall provides enough to farm without irrigation. Vines are farmed without synthetic additions.

Winemaking: Hand-picked and native-yeast fermented. With high natural acidity, SSH decided to put a few more of the barrels through malolactic fermentation than in warmer years and this gives a hint of richness to the wine. It was also whole-bunch-pressed to retain the super-fine structure of the year. With 50% MLF it spent 12 months in hogsheads (20% new) followed by 3 months in stainless steel before bottling.

Closure: Stelvin **ABV:** 12.3%

LEGEND tasting notes: A chiseled and linear style of chardonnay, but with a plumpness and texture that provides exciting tension. Aromas of smoked honey, green apple, lime curd, bunya bunya nut (Australian pinenut) and lemon aspen (a floral native citrus) that lead to a palate that displays both depth of flavor and freshness. Salinity and smokiness balance a softness of fruit, leading to a dry and bright finish. One of Tasmania's (Australia's? The world's?) best chardonnays; a truly remarkable expression.

Production size: 216 cases