



# Felton Road

From one of Central Otago's most revered single-vineyard Pinot Noir sites, Felton Road Block 5 2023 delivers a poised, deeply nuanced expression of Bannockburn, where fragrance, silk and precision unfold with captivating authority.



FELTON ROAD



Alcohol :14,50 %

Composition: 100% Pinot Noir

## Block 5 Pinot Noir 2023

Central Otago, New Zealand

### Region and Vineyards

Bannockburn, in **Central Otago**, is one of the world's southernmost fine-wine regions and one of New Zealand's most compelling homes for Pinot Noir. Felton Road farms four estate properties totalling 34 hectares here, all under organic and biodynamic certification, with Block 5 lying on a gentle north-facing slope in the middle of The Elms vineyard. The parcel was planted in 1993, and by the 2023 vintage the vines had reached roughly 30 years of age, a factor repeatedly linked with the wine's finesse and depth.

The site's soils shift up the slope from heavy loess and silt to clay lakebed deposits and angular schist gravels, giving the wine both textural breadth and mineral definition. Vineyard work is meticulous and entirely hands-on, with VSP canopy management, shoot thinning, leaf plucking, bunch thinning and harvest all done manually. Cover crops are used between rows to support vine balance, soil health and biodiversity. In 2023, a warm, dry summer was relieved by February rain and cooler nights, allowing slow, steady ripening and a measured harvest from 23 March.

### Winemaking

Felton Road's approach is deliberately non-interventionist, designed to preserve vineyard expression rather than impose cellar signature. For the 2023 Block 5, **100% Pinot Noir** fruit was handled by gravity, with 20% retained as whole clusters and the remainder carefully destemmed directly into fermenters. A long cold soak of 8 to 10 days preceded fermentation with indigenous yeasts, while hand punch-downs were carried out up to twice daily. Total time on skins was 21 to 25 days, building aromatic detail, supple tannin and measured structure.

After pressing, the wine was transferred by gravity into the underground barrel cellars and matured for **16 months in French oak, 25% new**. It was racked twice, then bottled in late August 2024 without fining or filtration. That regimen explains much of the wine's character: purity of fruit, silk-laden tannins, structural calm and an unforced sense of completeness. Felton Road's own note describes the palate as expanding like a "peacock's tail," a fitting image for a Pinot Noir that combines quiet entry with broad, harmonious persistence.



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## Block 5 Pinot Noir 2023

### Tasting Notes

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- **Color:** Bright ruby to deep garnet, vivid and youthful, with a polished, luminous core that signals concentration without heaviness.
- **Aroma:** Intensely perfumed and finely layered, offering raspberry, dark cherry, rhubarb, rose petal and violet, with nuances of dried herbs, nutmeg, graphite and a subtle pencil-shaving mineral note.
- **Palate:** Seamless, poised and tightly wound at this stage, yet already beautifully balanced. The fruit moves from red cherry and raspberry toward darker cherry tones, framed by pure acidity, silk-textured tannins and a savoury, mineral line. Concentrated but never heavy, it broadens gracefully through the mid-palate and finishes long, refined and quietly powerful.

### Did you know?

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Block 5 is widely regarded as one of Felton Road's flagship Pinot Noir sites, and it has long been singled out among New Zealand's finest examples of the grape. Even earlier editions of major wine references highlighted Felton Road's Block wines among the country's standout Pinot Noirs, underlining just how firmly this bottling is rooted in New Zealand fine-wine history.

### Wine Pairing Ideas

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- **Roast duck breast:** The wine's floral perfume, red-cherry precision and silky tannins are a natural match for duck's richness and delicate gaminess.
- **Herb-crusted lamb loin:** Bannockburn Pinot Noir's savoury herbs, dark fruit and fine structure work beautifully with tender lamb and rosemary-led seasoning.
- **Wild mushroom risotto:** Earthy mushrooms echo the wine's subtle forest-floor and spice complexity, while the creamy texture softens its youthful tension.
- **Seared salmon with miso glaze:** The wine's freshness and purity of fruit can handle the dish's umami depth while keeping the pairing lifted and elegant.



#### James Suckling (JS) : 98 Points (2023)

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*Floral and perfumed aromas of raspberries, rhubarb, rose petals, lead pencil and dark cherries. The palate has seamless tannins with an underlying power and pure acidity, yielding a tightly wound wine that will unravel in years to come. Made from 30-year-old, biodynamically grown vines. Exceptionally balanced and poised. Drink or hold. Screw cap.*



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## Block 5 Pinot Noir 2023



**Robert Parker (RP) : 96 Points (2023)**

*The 2023 Block 5 Pinot Noir is muscular and powerful and savory, totally in line with its esteemed reputation up to this point. This 2023 vintage has retained all of the thundering drive that the wine has become famous for, yet, via the fruit, it posits it in a highly focused and precise manner. The fruit feels lighter and more persistent, the tannins deftly handled and overwhelmingly sophisticated. Flavors include sandalwood, mortadella, cherry compote, dried herbs, pink peppercorns and crushed rocks. I love this wine because it tastes like Central Otago, specifically Bannockburn, but every aspect that has been able to be reined in has been, making for an elevated drinking experience. Excellent. Quite likely the best yet. 13.5% alcohol, sealed under screw cap.*



**Vinous (Antonio Galloni) (VN) : 96 Points (2023)**

*Layered and intriguing, the 2023 Pinot Noir Block 5 is finely fragranced, offering bags of primary sweet fruit, dried herbs and nutmeg spices. It is concentrated, focused and sinewy, with resolved, drawn-out tannins that give a sense of texture and provide focus, line and length. This is a baby. It will age beautifully.*



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