

Saint Clair

A deeply aromatic and elegant Syrah from Hawke's Bay, delivering richness, spice, and fine tannin definition with remarkable purity of fruit.

SAINT CLAIR
FAMILY ESTATE

Pioneer Block 17 Plateau Syrah 2020

Hawkes Bay, New Zealand



Alcohol :12,50 %

Composition: 100% Syrah

Region and Vineyards

The fruit for the Pioneer Block 17 Plateau Syrah 2020 comes from a **single vineyard on Omahu Road** in the **Gimblett Gravels winegrowing district**, located within the Hawke's Bay region of New Zealand's North Island. This zone is renowned for its **free-draining gravel soils**, deposited by the Ngaruroro River, which restrict vine vigour and result in **small, flavour-concentrated berries**.

The vineyard's **flat topography** and gentle slope provide optimal sun exposure, while the **warm, sheltered microclimate** and cool nights support full phenolic ripening without excessive sugar accumulation. These site-specific factors contribute to a Syrah of **perfumed aromatics, deep colour, and layered complexity**, affirming the region's growing reputation for world-class Syrah.

Winemaking

After harvest at peak flavour maturity, the grapes were cold-soaked for **four days** to enhance colour stability and extract aromatic intensity. The must was then inoculated for primary fermentation, with **hand plunging up to four times daily** to manage tannin structure and flavour extraction.

Once fermentation was complete, the wine was pressed and transferred to **French oak barrels** for maturation—**31% new and 69% seasoned oak**. During the **10-month élevage**, the wine underwent full **malolactic fermentation**, rounding the acidity and refining the mouthfeel. Final blending and gentle bottling preparation ensured purity and precision. The wine displays a **12.5% alcohol**, **6.2 g/L total acidity**, and a **pH of 3.50**, offering freshness alongside depth.

Tasting Notes

- **Color:** Dense ruby core with a thin purple rim
- **Aroma:** Intense boysenberry and wild blackberry aromas with integrated toasty oak
- **Palate:** Full-bodied and velvety, delivering rich dark berry fruit, a layered and supple texture, and lingering spice on the finish

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Did you know?

The Gimblett Gravels is one of only a few terroirs in the world defined by soil type rather than geographical boundaries. Wines labeled from this region must meet strict criteria to ensure authenticity and regional typicity—this makes Block 17 a **benchmark Syrah from a protected appellation-like zone**.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Slow-cooked lamb tagine with ras el hanout**: The wine's spice and structure enhance the aromatic intensity of the dish.
- **Chargrilled venison with blackberry jus**: Echoes the fruit profile while the tannins cut through the richness.
- **Dark chocolate and cherry torte**: A bold and indulgent pairing that plays on the wine's berry and spice notes.
- **Sichuan duck with five-spice glaze**: Matches the Syrah's exotic side and maintains balance with its silky texture.