Te Mata

Awatea 2022 embodies Te Mata Estate's enduring pursuit of excellence, capturing the vitality of Hawke's Bay through structure, freshness, and aromatic depth.

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Alcohol :13,50 %

Composition: 44% Merlot, 42% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14% Cabernet Franc

Awatea 2022

Hawkes Bay, New Zealand

Region and Vineyards

Hawke's Bay, located on New Zealand's North Island, is the country's oldest and second-largest wine region, renowned for Bordeaux-style reds. The 2022 Awatea draws fruit from Te Mata Estate's **Havelock Hills and Gimblett Gravels vineyards**, two of the region's most celebrated terroirs.

Havelock Hills, home to Te Mata's historic 1892 vineyard, lies on north-facing slopes of sandy loam. This site, officially recognized as New Zealand's first appellation in 1996 (the Te Mata Special Character Zone), is known for producing elegant, balanced wines of aromatic finesse. In contrast, the Gimblett Gravels subregion, shaped by the Ngaruroro River's 19th-century flood, boasts stony, free-draining soils rich in iron and gravel. This terroir retains heat and provides perfect ripening conditions for Cabernet and Merlot, yielding wines of **concentration, depth, and longevity**.

Winemaking

The 2022 Awatea is a blend of **42% Cabernet Sauvignon, 44% Merlot, and 14% Cabernet Franc**. Grapes were hand-harvested and destemmed, before undergoing **traditional warm-plunged fermentation** and an extended maceration on skins to maximize color, tannin, and aromatic complexity.

Following fermentation, the wines were aged for **15 months in French oak (30% new)** , undergoing a classic élevage with a second winter in barrel to enhance integration and polish. Final blending took place in July 2023, with bottling in November after gentle **egg-white fining**, ensuring finesse and balance. The result is a wine of precision and classical structure, designed to **evolve gracefully over time**.

Tasting Notes

- **Color:** Deep, vibrant red with youthful purple highlights.
- **Aroma:** Lifted notes of blackberry, cassis, and bay leaf, intertwined with currant, violets, olive, and subtle cedar spice.
- **Palate:** Concentrated layers of red and dark fruits, enhanced by floral tones, chocolate, and savory olive complexity. Bright acidity and **fine-grained tannins** provide tension and length, with a finish of poise and longevity.

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Did you know?

Awatea takes its name from the **SS Awatea**, a famous 1930s ocean liner whose name in Maori means *"Eye of the Dawn."* Requisitioned as a troop ship during WWII, it was sunk off Algeria in 1942. This historical reference underscores the wine's link to endurance and legacy.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Roast lamb with rosemary and garlic:** The herbal and savory notes in the wine echo the dish's aromatics, while the tannins cut through the richness.
- **Beef Wellington:** The wine's structure and dark fruit intensity pair beautifully with the meat's succulence and mushroom duxelles.
- **Grilled venison with juniper sauce:** Game meats highlight Awatea's wild berry and bay leaf complexity.
- **Aged cheddar:** The wine's acidity and tannins balance the cheese's richness, creating a harmonious finish.

95

Robert Parker (RP) : 95 Points (2022)

The 2022 Awatea Cabernets Merlot is floral and layered with cassis and raspberry, chalk and tobacco, paprika dolce and pink peppercorns. This is modern claret at its finest, and I find it to be beguiling in that way. It's softer and a little less structural than the 2021 but with so much cushioning and fruit. The tannins are firm through the finish, and I feel that balances the sweet fruit well. Yes.

93
James Suckling

James Suckling (JS) : 93 Points (2021)

Aromas of fresh flower stems and green leaves. Fresh bark, too. Roses. Graphite. Medium-bodied with tight and linear tannins and a focused and refined finish. Slightly chewy. Juicy.