

BRICK BAY PHAROS 2020



Our flagship red wine, produced only in exceptional years, Pharos 2020 slowly unfolds with aromas of dark berries, plums, and violets from the rare Petit Verdot component.

Harvest Date

15th - 30 March 2020

Bottling Date

18th March 2021

Quantity

178 Dozen

Composition

71% Petit Verdot, 14% Cabernet Franc, 12% Malbec, 3% Merlot

Region

Matakana

Alcohol

13.5%

TA

6.3

pH

3.3

Tasting Notes: An unusual blend of Petit Verdot, Cabernet Franc, Malbec and Merlot, deep crimson in colour with a vibrant edge. Aromas of dark berries, charcuterie, floral perfumes and smoky savoury notes. This seductive medium-bodied wine offers a palate of evolving layers of vibrant plums and blackberries, alongside the dusky warmth of leather, liquorice and earthy spices, with a saline streak encased in layered silky tannins. Youthful and assertive, Pharos 2020 will slowly reveal its glories over the course of a meal.

In the Vineyard: The 2020 vintage brought its share of challenges, especially with lockdown protocols in place, but our dedicated onsite team ensured the harvest at Brick Bay proceeded smoothly. Following a successful 2019 vintage, the 2020 season started early with uniform budburst and an early veraison, where the grapes began to soften and change colour. To protect our fruit from hungry birds, we netted the vines in mid-January as soon as the first signs of colour appeared.

Our vineyard team worked meticulously, hand-removing excess foliage to create an open canopy that allowed for better air movement and sunlight penetration. The increase in organic matter from our cover crops resulted in healthier vines, more resilient to disease.

The unprecedented drought conditions in the north produced smaller berries in most varieties, leading to a remarkable concentration of flavour. With no disease pressure, we had the luxury of waiting for the fruit to reach optimal ripeness without rushing the harvest. Hand-picking ensured the fruit was in pristine condition, contributing to what many believe could be the vintage of the decade.

In the Winery: In the winery, each of the 4 varieties was destemmed and crushed separately into small open-top fermenters. A selected yeast instigated fermentation, with the rising 'cap' of skins initially hand-plunged four times daily. As alcoholic fermentation proceeded, the plunging regime was decreased to avoid over-extraction.

After a period of post-fermentation maceration to add structure and balance, the wine was racked, the skins gently pressed, settled, then aged in mainly new French oak barriques. After 12 months, selected barriques were blended, bottled without fining and then bottle-aged for over 2 years before release.

Aging Potential: Totally approachable now, but in stable cellaring conditions, will continue to evolve and develop further complexity over the next 10 or more years.
