

TAPANAPPA

A U S T R A L I A

TAPANAPPA FOGGY HILL DEFINITUS 2018 PINOT NOIR

Bottled in February 2019
Only 430 dozen
Grown and made

I have observed that the centre of the Foggy Hill north-western slope planted in 2003 to Dijon Pinot Noir clones 115 and 777, routinely ripens grapes to a balance and fruit intensity more uniformly than the rest of the vineyard.

The various blocks of the rest of Foggy Hill complement one another to produce the unique and typical terroir expression that defines Foggy Hill Pinot Noir. It had often occurred to me to harvest the central blocks separately and produce a wine, still Foggy Hill but defined by the special location on the hill. In 2017 the case was compelling and in 2019 we released the 2017 “Definitus” - the very first.

The 2018 Definitus is the second release of this special wine from a special part of a special vineyard. The central area of Foggy Hill is defined by its special terroir and the wine from this area defines Foggy Hill terroir expression.

What else to call it but “Definitus”? By the way there were plenty of other ideas.

The Taste of the Wine

This 2018 Definitus special bottling of Foggy Hill Pinot Noir has intense cerise colour. The aroma is of complex, ripe dark fruits, black and blueberries, faint cassis and hints of floral notes. The flavours are rich, ripe and dense with plum to compliment the characteristic Foggy Hill earthy, spicy complexity. The tannins are fine but pervasive and the warm year 2018 Foggy Hill “Definitus” will benefit from a decade or longer of bottle age.

Vintage Notes

2018 vintage was another in an increasing frequency of above average temperature vintages. Meanwhile the average moves inexorably upward. At Foggy Hill, 2018 was the warmest growing season since 1960 and probably back further. A growing season heat summation (HDD) for 2018 of 1625°C days significantly exceeds the 58-year average of 1298°C days. However, there were no heat waves with only 4 days exceeding 35°C. Nights were a strong contributor to the elevated growing season heat and that is a plus for quality.

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As well as being warm, 2018 was exceptionally dry with less than half normal rainfall during the ripening period from January to March. Fruit set in late November in ideal conditions established a very big crop requiring half of the bunches to be thinned from the vines at veraison in late January.

In 2018 Foggy Hill delivered disease free, thoroughly ripe fruit in perfect condition and at moderate sugar levels. The crop level was also ideal at 6 tonnes/hectare. 2018 Foggy Hill Definitus Pinot Noir has an abundance of colour and had low malic acid content (indicating perfect ripeness) at harvest on the 12th and 13th of March which is the normal harvest window.

Winemaking Notes

The hand harvested Pinot Noir fruit from the Definitus area of Foggy Hill Vineyard was delivered to the Tapanappa Winery in the Piccadilly Valley.

There 15% of chilled whole bunches was placed in the bottom of each 0.8 tonne fermentation tub. The tubs were topped with chilled destemmed and crushed a must and allowed a two-day cold soak beginning at 2°C, then inoculated with our own grown yeast strain and allowed to ferment to a maximum temperature of 33°C with daily hand plunging of the cap. The whole bunches at the bottom of the tubs were progressively crushed to release their sugar.

At the end of fermentation after 16 days, the tubs were sealed to allow 5 days of maceration on skins then pressed block by block, clone by clone, to barriques (one third new) with an inoculation of a malo-lactic bacterial strain.

After malo-lactic fermentation on full lees, the batches were racked and returned to barrique for maturation. After 10 months in barrique the Foggy Hill Definitus batch was clear racked in January of 2019 and prepared for bottling in mid-February.

The in-bottle analysis is:

pH 3.61

Total Acid 5.5 g/L

SO₂ 13/68

Volatile Acid 0.70 g/L

Alcohol 14.0 %

Winemaker BRIAN CROSER