



ESCARPMENT KUPE PINOT NOIR 2022

94+ POINTS

The 2022 Kupe Pinot Noir is mouthfilling and complex, with gravitas and weight without being heavy. The splay of tannin in the mouth starts right at the very front and fans out through the long finish. It is the most harmonious and intense

of the four single-vineyard wines tasted here today, and while I am seriously attracted to the levity and intrigue of the Kiwa, this Kupe is wonderful for different reasons. There's density, muscle, slow/patient repose and complex nuance in the mouth. It's a great, distinct wine.

Sealed under screw cap. Kupe was picked on March 31. The Abel clone was used. It's close-planted (this is the last pick from the close-planted vines, which have now been pulled out). It's on its own roots and planted at a higher density, but it was hit by phylloxera, sadly. The wine was plunged once daily and was on the skins for 30 days. Aging was in 42% new French barriques, with the balance in one- and two-year-old barrels. It was in barrel for 20 months with no racking prior to bottling in December 2023. 14.5% alcohol.

ESCARPMENT PAHI

PINOT NOIR 2022

93 POINTS

The 2022 Pahi Pinot Noir is only the second Pahi since 2014 (2020 was the other one), due to a change of ownership of the Pahi Vineyard. **The wine has a succulent, chewy texture that is most pleasurable on the mid-palate. There's red fruit, particularly pomegranate, that melds beautifully with a gentle shortcrust pastry character, pink peppercorns and a hint of clove and arnica through the finish. The ripeness of the wine is evident in a splay of dried red fruits through the finish, specifically goji berries.** 14% alcohol, sealed under screw cap. Pahi is a slightly more vigorous block with four hectares. This was made with clones Abel, 5, 115 and 667, and 37% whole bunch fruit was used, with 28 days on the skins. Aging was in 30% new oak (mostly Quintessence), and the balance was one- and two-year-old barrels. It was in oak for 20 months without racking before bottling.



ESCARPMENT KIWA PINOT NOIR 2022

93+ POINTS

The vineyard for the 2022 Kiwa Pinot Noir has changed since a recent acquisition and change of hands of the original Kiwa block, which is situated in the town of Martinborough. The wine leads with spiced strawberry, cherry, pomegranate molasses, red apple and pink peppercorn. The wine is mineral and spicy, with a spool of finely milled tannin and acid, which feels intimately connected. It's febrile.

There's a hint of red licorice and orange rind and tobacco through the finish. Texture really is key to the experience here. **While the fruit is red and white, the texture has a grippy, mineral character to it. It's an intriguing and elevating offset to the fruit profile.**

This shift in gear midway across the palate makes for complex drinking. Very good.

It will be even better in a few years, I'd wager. 13.5% alcohol, sealed under screw cap. Kiwa was picked early on March 27, driven by the weather. There was no hang time in 2022, with no picking at leisure. This is mostly clone 115, with the balance Abel clone and clone 943. Made with 43% whole bunch, the wine spent time in 40% new oak, with the balance in two-year-old barrels and older. It spent 27 days on the skins, plunged daily, and then spent 20 months in oak without racking. It was bottled in December 2023.

ESCARPMENT TE REHUA PINOT NOIR 2022 / 93 POINTS

The 2022 Te Rehua Pinot Noir is the darkest in color, with lashings of brooding exotic spice, black cherries, blood plum and even a hint of pepper-rolled pastrami. In the mouth, the wine is illuminated by fresh acidity; the ripe fruit speaks of blackberries and mouthfilling sweet roasted beetroot and brine. There is a duality of ripe fruit and very fine acidity in the mouth; they sit comfortably within each other's arms. 14.2% alcohol, sealed under screw cap. Te Rehua was planted in the 1990s, in town, at 1.5 hectares and using massal selection of clones. Normally, it's the first pick of the vintage, as it's a warmer site sheltered by hedges—brilliant hedges in New Zealand. Grapes were picked on March 20, where they sat on the skins for 25 days. Made with 21% whole bunch (normally around 50%), it was pressed down to 43% in new French barriques, with the balance being one- and two-year-old barrels. It spent 20 months in oak, with no racking prior to bottling.

ESCARPMENT PINOT NOIR 2022 / 92 POINTS

The 2022 Pinot Noir is super spicy on the nose, with sumac, blood orange, tobacco, black tea and cherry pip. In the mouth, the wine is light and spicy but intense—the acidity feels like it wraps around the fruit, leading to a fine-boned and red-fruited expression. It's a beauty. Really elegant but structural. The tannins are ductile and focused. I like the grip and pull of the tannins through the finish. It seems to plume with a coal dust, graphite character. 13.7% alcohol, sealed under screw cap. This wine was made with 24% whole bunch fruit, and 75% came from the Te Muna Road Vineyard, with the balance from town. It was on the skins for 25 days, then spent 11 months in 27% new oak. It was in tank for a further nine months prior to bottling.

ESCARPMENT NOIR PINOT NOIR 2022 / 89 POINTS

This 2022 Noir is fresh and spicy and light in the glass. Winemaker Tim Bourne said there was "no sunshine to bring out the color." There's white strawberry, white pepper, red apples and pomegranate. This is uncomplicated and fresh, delivering really pretty vinosity without insisting on deep thinking. 13.4% alcohol, sealed under screw cap. This comes from 24 individual parcels, 24% from the Te Muna Road Vineyard and the balance coming from town.

ESCARPMENT CHARDONNAY 2022 / 93 POINTS

The 2022 Chardonnay shows a cooler vintage than 2021 which saw lots of rain, not a lot of sunshine and some disease pressure—the start of a wet 2023. This is starkly different on the nose! There's far less reduction and flint. This is pretty, floral, pure and mineral. In the mouth, this has a sublime quality to it. It's far sleeker and more polished than the 2021. This tastes far more like a place, this place, than the reduction in the previous wine. It's great! Clones 95, 548 and Mendoza were used. 13% alcohol, sealed under screw cap.

ESCARPMENT ROSÉ 2023 / 91 POINTS

The 2023 Rosé leads with soft watermelon, pink peppercorn, Pink Lady apples and white strawberry. The palate is pillowy and soft, with an attractive rollout of flavor in the mouth. Really pretty. Dry. Made using 100% saignée Pinot Noir with the juice settled overnight and then the clean juice was racked to an old barrel for wild ferment. It sat on the lees for four months and then was bottled in spring. 13% alcohol, sealed under screw cap.

ESCARPMENT BLANC 2023 / 92 POINTS

The 2023 Blanc is 100% Pinot Blanc from half a hectare on the estate. "[We're] the only winery in the district with it, as far as I know," says Winemaker Tim Bourne. Grapes were handpicked, settled overnight in tank and then were transferred into old oak for wild ferment in situ, where it sat post-ferment for several months before a spring bottling. In the mouth, this is creamy and plump, with a mineral line of acid that penetrates the white flowers. It's a beautiful wine that's textural and fine, with white pepper and green apple skins. 12.5% alcohol, sealed under screw cap.

ESCARPMENT GRIS 2023 / 90 POINTS

The 2023 Gris leads with nashi pear, green apple skins, white pepper and brine. This is a pretty wine—fleshier and more welcoming than the Blanc but slightly less complex. Grapes were handpicked, whole-bunch pressed, settled overnight and then moved to old barrels for wild ferment. It's made very similarly to the Blanc, which was tasted beside. 13% alcohol, sealed under screw cap.