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Rockburn 'Central Otago' Pinot Gris 2016

Grape Varietal:	100% Pinot Gris
Growing Region:	Central Otago, New Zealand
Head Winemaker:	Malcolm Rees-Francis



I first met the owners of Rockburn Wines back in early 2003 just after they had rebranded from Hay's Lake - alongside which their first vines were planted back in 1991 near Arrowtown - Central Otago. It was thought that the brand name should more truly reflect the terroir of their vineyards. So Rockburn crafted its name from the rugged, rock-strewn and scarred landscape of Central Otago which surrounds their vines.

The region is renowned for its stunning scenery - with rugged mountains and picturesque lakes along with world class Pinot Noir - with Rockburn producing one of the most acclaimed and awarded in the region.

Though this review highlights Rockburn's quality across its range - and with the lighter side of the grape family and expresses an interpretation that is unique to New Zealand. But like all good Pinot Gris, this wine is so approachable and versatile for many occasions, shared with good food and friends.

Malcolm aims with all his wines to try and express the superb regional characters in each varietal. Looking to show a pure expression of Central Otago in the glass - which you can taste in this 2016 Pinot Gris. The fruit for this wine was sourced from two clones grown over two sites. The Dustbowl vineyard where the vines are planted in a thin layer of loam over river gravels and the Gibbston vineyard which has a thicker layer of loam over alluvial gravels.

Another testing growing season saw the vines experience a sunny start, then some rain and at least two snow events in January (*yes in the middle of summer*). At the time of harvest, the vines had produced reduced yields, but concentrated berry flavours.

The handpicked grapes on arrival into the winery, vinification was respectful and with a relatively cool fermentation on gross lees in stainless steel tanks. As mentioned, looking to retain natural aromatics, finesse and varietal typicity. Once Malcolm was happy he stopped each parcel at different points of sugar/acid balance then racked them off, blended and bottled in early September.

In your glass you will be greeted by a pale gold colour with a shiny hue. On the nose this Central Otago Pinot Gris showcases white peach and nashi pear aromas. These characters flow onto and through to the back-palate landscape, presenting a vibrant fruit driven wine with a well-balanced off-dry palate. These developed flavours are defined by a seam of minerality, a signature of the region, leading to a lively finish that teases you to have another sip. *Treat yourself - this wine is definitely worth sharing.*

This 2016 Rockburn 'Central Otago' Pinot Gris has 14% Alc./vol. Chill gently and serve in an aromatic wine glass at 8-9°C.

Cellaring Potential:

Drinking perfectly this summer season; and will age well for another 2-3 years.

Food Pairing Suggestions:

Perfect wine as an aperitif or paired with seasoned seafood, varied Asian cuisine, seafood paella, summer salads, vegetarian dishes and mild cheeses - *enjoy.*

An engaging Pinot Gris with a seam of minerality and defined character.

