

## Forte by EATON 2020

### Our Story

The Eaton wine journey began in 1981 when I took my first vineyard job in Marlborough. In 1991 with my wife Jo, we then developed the Clayvin and Eaton vineyard (1999). That started our family along the path of winemaking from small parcels of hillside grown grapes.

The purpose of the EATON brand is to allow our family to work with these small parcels of fruit from unique Marlborough vineyards. Vines are hand-tended and the wines hand crafted.

We work closely with the family owners of these sites to craft special and memorable wines.

We strive for wines that are truly expressive of their origin and are made in a very natural way. This allows for reduced use of preservatives, processing and eliminates the need for fining.

*Mike Eaton*

### Cuvee Forte by EATON

By design, this wine is unashamedly provocative. It is in no way subtle. Fermentation with indigenous yeasts, lees-stirring and some skin contact all are accentuated by fermentation and aging in Cigar shaped barrels. Not for the faint hearted but a wine that will certainly provoke conversation.

### The Vintage

2020 in so many ways was a mirror of 2019. That was.... Until Covid 19!! A moderate to low yielding vintage that was a Marlborough classic. A warm dry spring gave even flowering and yields were slightly moderate to low. The season was punctuated by enough rainfall to keep the vines in balance and maintain structure, flavour and acidity while keeping potential alcohols at a nice level. Late summer was very dry with very cool evenings that allowed fruit retain acidity, flavour and intensity while keeping alcohol in balance. Yields were kept low and vines were shoot-thinned, leaf-plucked and thinned by hand. Pre-veraison 10-15% of the crop was green thinned and shoulders were removed.

It was devastating however that we could not harvest our allocation of Thistle Hill Sauvignon due to difficulties around access and staff for harvesting due to Covid. Fortunately, Breezemere had an exceptional vintage.

<b>Vineyard</b>	Breezemere vineyard
<b>Variety</b>	Sauvignon Blanc
<b>Region</b>	Awatere, Marlborough
<b>Harvest</b>	Hand harvested in two batches 26 <sup>th</sup> March and 3 <sup>rd</sup> April 2020

### The Making

<b>Process</b>	Whole bunch pressed straight to barrel - No added enzymes, SO <sub>2</sub> or yeasts
<b>Fermentation</b>	Wild natural fermentation, followed by 100% Malolactic fermentation
<b>Barrel work</b>	Lees stirred at the on-set of malolactic fermentation and twice post Malolactic fermentation
<b>Barrel Aging</b>	8 months in Ermitage Cigars and 2yr old 600L Demi Muid
<b>Assemblage</b>	After 8 months assembled to stainless steel tank for settling and minimal SO <sub>2</sub> addition
<b>Marriage</b>	Settled almost 3 months before being bottled

<b>Bottling</b>	Un-fined and unfiltered 10 <sup>th</sup> March 2021
<b>pH</b>	3.12
<b>TA</b>	7.6
<b>Alc</b>	13.5%
<b>Production</b>	980 bottles

**The Drinking** Intense aroma of orange zest, wild herb and floral notes. Textured and complex on the palate with fine, bright acidity and a lingering minerality.

