

# The SUPERNATURAL

**Vintage 2017** – 100% Sauvignon Blanc, farmed organically, vinified naturally and estate grown by winemaker and viticulturist Hayden Penny. The vineyard and wine are certified organic with [www.biogro.co.nz](http://www.biogro.co.nz) effective from March 2015. The block has an excellent history of organic farming since first plantings in 1989. With the renewed focus on organics and following biodynamic principles in the vineyard, the soil and vines are now coming naturally into balance and health with wine quality increasing as a result.

**Terroir** – The vineyard is truly an amazing site for viticulture, situated in the Tuki Tuki Hills in Hawke's Bay on a north-facing hillside with slopes up to 30 degrees. Soils are Kidnappers Group lime-rich clay, with volcanic influence. The site has proven pedigree being in proximity to and on similar soils, slope and aspect as Te Mata Coleraine, one of New Zealand's most accoladed vineyards. Over 90% of New Zealand's vineyards are on flat land which generally means alluvial gravel soils, making this hillside site an unusual soil type of great interest.

**Tasting Notes** – Smoky and spicy notes are characteristic of the site, along with richness and texture we encourage with skin and lees contact. The 2017 wine has intense white-fleshed nectarine, honeydew, citrus and smoky notes on the nose. It is rich and full with a mouth-filling creamy texture, soft acidity and a long lingering mouthfeel. Apricot, peach, pineapple and melon flavours are obvious on the palate combined with The Supernatural's classic jalapeño pepper spiciness, hot river stone minerality and hints of vanilla, followed by a beautiful lime and grapefruit finish.

**The Region** – Hawke's Bay's climate is similar to Bordeaux but cooler, producing a more vibrant Sauvignon Blanc style that is versatile and food-friendly. The wine style falls somewhere between Bordeaux, Loire and New Zealand and it has its own unique and appealing character..

**Philosophy** – The Supernatural is an organically farmed and naturally vinified wine. The philosophy relies on great *terroir* and traditional processes. Our aim is to produce one of the world's best Sauvignon Blancs, naturally and organically.

**Winemaking** – Harvest is by machine using a Pellenc selective head harvester which ensures a high quality of fruit while excluding all other materials. Six hours soaking on skins before gentle pressing. Settled overnight at 15°C before racking off heavy lees. Fermented with indigenous yeast at cool temperatures. Full, natural malolactic fermentation and extensive lees contact and stirring for 12 months. Prepared for bottling with a minimal sulphur addition. Unfined.

**Stats** – Alc 11.6% | TA 4.8g/L | pH 3.44 | RS 2.4g/L | FSO<sub>2</sub> 22mg/L | TSO<sub>2</sub> 50mg/L

**Production** – 1,750 dozen.

SUPERNATURAL WINE CO.  
83 MILLAR ROAD, RD10, HASTINGS 4180, NEW ZEALAND  
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# *The* **SUPERNATURAL**

Stephen Wong MW, Wine Sentience, [www.winesentience.com](http://www.winesentience.com), – September 2018

When I first tasted the cleanskin bottles on my desk (they hadn't been labelled yet), I thought I'd been sent Green Glow (I hadn't). This latest vintage of Supernatural is another iteration along from the last; richer, weightier and possessing the body and power which I had previously only seen in Hayden's skin-fermented wines. My understanding is that this wine has more skin-contact before fermentation than it used to, and it shows.

With time in the glass, the character of the wine emerges in force (I recommend not serving this \*too\* cold). Subtle cinnamon spice, hints of dried thyme and bay leaf, quince and baked apple with a fleeting suggestion of melting butter – this full-bodied, intense, rounded and mouth-filling juice reads more like an Alsace Pinot Blanc than your typical New Zealand Sauvignon. The palate is analytically dry, but has plenty of chewy fat, rounded phenolics and the seamless richness of extended lees-work.

Underneath this complexity, resides some Sauvignon Blanc cues – a touch of crunch here, the impression of nettle and green apple there. Not in the foreground, but it's there if you look, weaving in and out of the warmer, more oxidative yellow-fruited notes. There is a soaring, yet melancholy air to the way these flavours flow. I'm reminded of those poignant moments in Studio Ghibli films where a child stands on a hill with boundless sky stretching above her, fast-moving clouds of yellow-white and the perfectly drawn fields of grass animated in waves of gold and green as the dry wind blows through the scene. This wine takes me there in an instant.

I have to admit I was trepidatious of the 2017 vintage, given the challenging harvest conditions Hawke's Bay faced that year, but this has risen above it admirably. It's not for everyone – there isn't the upfront fruit and crisp, refreshing spring nature which most Kiwi Sauvignon drinkers prize, but as far as a poster child for a reinvented 2.0 version of NZ Sauv goes, this is a serious contender!

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