PROPHET’S ROCK
CELLAR DOOR (LONDON)

With cellar doors now being allowed to open across the wine regions of New Zealand post the COVID-19 outbreak, most of NZ leading winemakers are taking the opportunity to sell their wines. Unfortunately for Paul Pujol, winemaker and GM of Prophet’s Rock, his stunning vineyards and winery are so remote it would take a very keen wine lover with a map and compass to locate the road to the winery (~ it’s not on GPS) tucked away in the mountains of Central Otago.

After a chat one night with Heath Ball, Paul’s long-time friend and owner of London’s Red Lion and Sun Pub, they hatched a plan to have the World’s furthest from the winery “cellar door”

Since the lockdown started back on the 20th of March, Heath has earned a reputation for bucking the trend for pubs during the lockdown, by creating a hugely successful retail bottle shop in the front garden of the pub.

Heath commented: “The Prophet’s Rock Cellar Door will be added to the current offer, with customers able to purchase all of Paul’s wines at very keen retail pricing and buy takeaway alongside wine tasting kits to try all of Paul’s wines”.

With holidays to New Zealand being a long way away, this is a great opportunity to try some of the best wines New Zealand has to offer without leaving London. [Tasting notes by Paul Pujol]

**TASTING KIT:** 50ml of each of the wines £15

**Dry Riesling, 2014** < a rare treat to try an older vintage of the Riesling. £25

This wine is definitely not about global domination by volume - we only have one hectare. Our Riesling receives a ridiculous amount of attention in the vineyard and winery given that we only make around 300 cases a year. We would drink it all ourselves but there are only 7 staff at Prophet’s Rock so we can’t quite manage it. Located on our extremely steep Rocky Point Vineyard, the soil is basically straight schist rock which seems to suit the Riesling just fine. After hand-picking and a slow whole-bunch press the juice is wild fermented in old oak barrels, matured on its yeast lees, and released after a minimum of a year in bottle.

**Pinot Gris, 2018** Consistently regarded as one of the iconic Pinot Gris of New Zealand. Probably because we treat our white wines exactly the same in the vineyard as our top Pinot Noir. The viticulture is combined with making the wine the same way I worked in Alsace when Kuentz-Bas was kind enough to make me their first non-family winemaker since founding in 1795. After a few jokes in the region about how I was going to ‘make all the wines taste like kiwifruit’ things in Alsace went really well. The Pinot Gris is fermented with wild yeast, predominately in old oak barrels and bottled just before the next vintage. This wine gets to travel in the front of the plane with Air New Zealand, sadly that luxury position doesn’t extend to the winemaker… £25

**Infusion Pinot Noir, 2017** - served chilled “If a chilled Beaujolais ran off with Pinot Noir to the mountains of Central Otago” £25

Prophet’s Rock is known for its low intervention style and very elegant expression of their two stunning vineyards in Central Otago. With Infusion, winemaker Paul Pujol has taken this approach even further to deliver a beautifully aromatic and pure expression of site. This Pinot Noir has been made without fermenting the wine on its skins. Instead, the juice sat with the skins and gently infused colour and flavour for 10 days before being pressed and ‘wild’ fermented in old barrels. Vibrant and fresh with loads of floral and red fruit flavours this is an excellent food wine and a great accompaniment to a beautiful summer. Only 5000 bottles were made. Heath

‘Home Vineyard’ Pinot Noir, 2015 £40

Our Home Vineyard has one of the best panoramic views going, and importantly it has some pretty interesting soil. This steep, elevated terrace was carved out by a glacier about 650k years ago and the schist parent material has been transformed over time to clay and chalk. The sun-facing slope ensures ripeness while the high elevation provides a signature freshness and natural balance. I really want the wines to reflect our sites and not winemaking, so I have moved away from winemaking practises I think detract from showcasing the vineyard. This wine is fermented with almost no extraction, aged 17 months in barrel, is bottled unfiltered and cellared for at least a year before release.

‘Cuvée Aux Antipodes’, 2016 £80

This wine is a very special collaboration between myself and Chambolle-Musigny winemaker François Millet. The seed of the project started when I worked with François at Domaine Comte Georges de Vougeô for the 2009 vintage. It was very important to me that he was able to make the wines with exactly his methods, so I imported all of the traditional winemaking equipment he uses at the Domaine. This is the first wine he’s made outside of Chambolle-Musigny since he started there in 1986, and shows François’s signature purity and elegance. This collaboration and the resulting wine is an important milestone in the history of Central Otago as a wine region. 293 cases were made from one block on the Home Vineyard, the collaboration is on-going.