

# Russian River Ranches

Vintage 2014 • Sonoma Coast • Estate Bottled Chardonnay

## OBSERVATIONS ON A NEW VINTAGE

2014 was another incredibly dry year with the formal declaration of a California drought. We were able to make it through the season without water shortages in the vineyards by using deficit irrigation concepts and careful soil and plant moisture data. Throughout most of the growing season, we paced about two weeks earlier than a typical season, including another classic California spring and summer without any weather extremes. We also anticipated an early harvest until the arrival of significant fog and a late summer cool down. Harvest began a little earlier than normal on August 22. Warming and cooling trends over the next couple weeks brought harvest into full swing. A two week flurry of harvest followed and the last grapes trickled in on October 1. Harvest 2014 delivered another beautiful Sonoma County vintage.

## OUR ESTATE VINEYARDS

Russian River Ranches is a cuvée of distinct vineyard lots, each contributing its own personality to the wine. Our Vine Hill Vineyard's quick-draining, sandy, clay soils produce smaller berries, lower yields, and add concentrated flavors to the blend. At Shiloh in the Mayacamas Range, the warmer climate produces riper, more full-bodied fruit. The Les Pierres Vineyard's gravelly clay loam, thick with cobbled stones, provides a varied mineral essence. The Kent Vineyard, with its cool morning, allows for extended maturation and adds backbone and elegance. And the Cutrer Vineyard, with its collection of unique, small vineyard blocks, provides us a spice rack of flavors. These vineyards come together to create a Chardonnay that is consistent from year to year and remains among the most coveted in each and every vintage.

## ON THE WINE

Grapes were hand-harvested starting in the early mornings and then cooled down to preserve the fruit's fresh flavors and natural acidity. After hand-sorting, the grapes were whole-cluster pressed to avoid bitter tannins from the skins and grape seeds. The cool, clear golden-green, free-run juice was then settled naturally in tanks for a few days before heading to French oak barrels and stainless steel for fermentation. The wine was then aged sur-lies in French oak barrels that were a mixture of new and one-year-old through neutral oak.

This vintage is very aromatic, fruit forward, loaded with aromas of lemon and lime, and accented with nougat, green apple, spices, pear and touches of wet stone minerality. True to the Russian River Ranches style, the wine is beautifully focused with a nice, bright acidity balanced by a long focused finish and a light mid-palate creaminess. Crisp and zesty flavors of lemon drop, green apple, white peach and lychee are accented with a nice barrel spice and persistent lime.



Alcohol 14.2% • TA: 5.92 gms/L • pH: 3.35 • RS: 2.10 gms/L •  
100% Chardonnay • 100% Malolactic Fermentation • Oak aged  
for a total of 8 months – 16% New, 16% 1 yr, 18% 2 yr,  
18% 3 yr, 32% neutral  
Vineyard Breakdown:  
Vine Hill 17%, Cutrer 2%, Les Pierres 11%, Shiloh 12%, Kent  
4%, Other 54%

**SONOMA-CUTRER**  
V I N E Y A R D S

Please Share the Cutrer Responsibly.