



VINE HILL CHARDONNAY

VINTAGE 2021 • RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY • ESTATE BOTTLED

OBSERVATIONS ON A NEW VINTAGE

And here we go again! With only a third of our normal rainfall and a fairly, dry spring, California continues to be in the throes of an historic drought. As in other drought years, careful monitoring of the vine needs and soil moisture got us through a difficult season. A huge benefit was a perfect spring/summer season with no weather extremes. This was followed by a typical cool down the first half of August and then perfect ripening weather throughout the entire harvest.

We started about a week later than normal with grapes from Les Pierres on Sept 1st. Conditions remained perfect all the way through harvest with the last of the fruit arriving at the winery on October 7th. Always keeping us on our toes, two weeks later, Mother Nature sent us record breaking rainfall for October!

OUR VINE HILL ESTATE VINEYARD

Our Vine Hill Vineyard, in the heart of the Russian River Valley, with its nearly 300-ft. elevation change, allows each ridge, slope, and valley in the vineyard to contribute unique characteristics to the grapes. Combined with a variety of soils, clones and rootstocks that limit excessive vine growth, the vineyards provide a beautiful variety of elegant and balanced fruit. We chose the Dijon Chardonnay clone fruit with its tight meter-by-meter spacing to produce this newest addition to our Chardonnay family of brands.

ON THE WINE

Grapes were 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, golden-green, free-run juice was then settled naturally in tanks for a few days before heading to French oak barrels for fermentation. The wine was then aged sur-lies in French oak barrels that were a mixture of new and two years old until it was bottled on August 30th, 2022. It was then allowed to bottle age for another three months to develop bottle bouquet.

The 2021 vintage produced beautiful Chardonnay fruit which allowed Sonoma-Cutrer, for the first time, to craft a limited release, single vineyard, Vine Hill Chardonnay designate. This wine presents bold and beautiful French oak aromas laced with caramel, toasted nuts, baking spice, along with, fruit notes of ripe apricot, melon and just a touch of honey. As you taste, you will notice the aromas closely mirror the wine flavors with caramel, toasted nuts, spice, ripe apple, apricot and just a touch of smoke shining through. This rich, flavorful wine is sure to be a favorite among Chardonnay lovers!

Alcohol By Volume 14.2% • TA: 5.2 gms/L • pH: 3.4 • RS: Dry • 100% Chardonnay
Vineyard Designation: Vine Hill Vineyard
Fermentation: 100% Barrel Fermented and aged for 10 months in 50% new and 50% 2-year-old French barrels • 100% Malolactic



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