



RUSSIAN RIVER RANCHES

VINTAGE 2016 • SONOMA COAST • ESTATE BOTTLED CHARDONNAY

OBSERVATIONS ON A NEW VINTAGE

Although 2016 saw seasonal rainfall closer to average, California officially marked its fifth year of continued drought. As in year's past, we used deficit irrigation concepts and soil and plant moisture data to carefully manage our water resources.

This year brought another classic California spring and summer without any weather extremes and throughout most of the growing season, we paced about two weeks earlier than our average. Fog and cooler conditions returned in August slowing the pace of ripening closer to a normal harvest start. Our Chardonnay harvest began with fruit from Les Pierres on August 26th.

Throughout September, the weather was picture perfect. Like clockwork, each weekend brought a small warm push followed by cooling during the week. The weather variations gave us a steady stream of perfectly ripe fruit over the course of the total six-week harvest. With the long hang time, the fruit developed beautiful depth of flavors and held its bright, natural acidity. The last of the fruit arrived at our Chardonnay winery on October 7th.

OUR ESTATE VINEYARDS

Russian River Ranches is a cuvée of distinct vineyard lots, each contributing its own personality to the wine. The Sonoma Coast appellation features diverse soil types and growing conditions perfect for producing exceptional Chardonnay. Russian River Ranches is made from select lots representing the finest vineyards this appellation has to offer. For this vintage, the blend contains fruit from our six estate vineyards & a small group of carefully selected growers. The cool afternoon Pacific breezes, fog & diurnal temperature variations dramatically affect all of these sites.

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, 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.

Russian River Ranches is a beautiful, pale straw color. On the nose, this wine is a virtual cornucopia of aromatic fruit. It opens with scents of Bosc pear and Honeycrisp apple accentuated with notes of nougat, roasted nuts, oak spice and a touch of citrus blossom. True to the Russian River Ranches style, the wine is beautifully focused on the palate with bright acidity and a nicely balanced long, flavorful structure. This vintage is refreshing and juicy with crisp, zesty flavors of lemon, green apple, lime and barrel spice that dissolve to a light, creamy mid-palate before ending with Sonoma-Cutrer's signature citrus acidity that rounds out to a long, persistent finish.

Alcohol 14.2% • TA: 6.40 gms/L • pH: 3.40 • RS: 1.80 gms/L (dry) • 100% Chardonnay • 100% Malolactic Fermentation - 85% Oak, 15% Tank

Oak aged for a total of 8 months - 17% New, 15% 1 yr., 18% 2 yr., 18% 3 yr., 33% neutral

Vineyard Breakdown - Vine Hill 17%, Cutrer 11%, Les Pierres 6%, Shiloh 8%, Kent, 7%, Owsley 3%, Other 48%



SONOMA=CUTRER

Please enjoy our wines responsibly.

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