



ARISTA

2014 RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY CHARDONNAY

Sonoma County

VINTAGE NOTES

2014 was our second full year of drought in the North Coast, and not surprisingly, the growing season was dry and warm. Everything was early in 2014: Dry soils and mild spring weather resulted in one of the earliest initiations of budbreak we've seen in years. That trend continued throughout the season, as we stayed several weeks ahead of average all the way through the onset of harvest in mid-August.

WINEMAKING

Cold grapes arrive at the winery early in the morning after having been picked at night. If necessary, the clusters are sorted by hand and then gently transferred as whole clusters directly into our press. The grapes will undergo an extremely gentle press cycle lasting three to four hours. The slow, gentle-press cycle allows us to extract the flavorful juice from the grapes yet mitigates the extraction of bitter tannins resulting from damaged or broken seeds and stems. The sweet, fresh juice is then transferred to a stainless-steel tank and allowed to settle overnight. From the settling tank, the juice is moved to 60-gallon French oak barrels. Once in barrel, fermentation is allowed to occur naturally using native yeast that come in from our vineyards. We do not inoculate any of our wines, white or red, with industrial strains of yeast for primary or secondary fermentation. Fermentations build very slowly over the first few months due to the fragile and complex nature of native yeast. Limited battonage is used during the first two to three months of fermentation in order to encourage the development of a healthy yeast population. Once fermentation is safely underway the wine is not disturbed until the fermentation is complete. It is critical to not move or disturb the fermenting wine during this time in order to allow gravity to be clarifying the wine. It is not uncommon for primary and secondary fermentation to take 10-plus months. Once the wines have fully completed fermentation, normally about 10 to 11 months, final blends are assembled and the wine is gently racked to stainless-steel tanks. This time in stainless steel is key as it allows the young, newly blended wines to begin to knit together and further allows for a second clarification by gravity. Time in stainless steel typically is four to six months. At the end of this period, approximately 16 to 18 months in total, the wine is bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.

TASTING NOTES

The 2014 Russian River Valley Chardonnay is a blend of our three RRV Chardonnay vineyards: El Diablo, Banfield and Ritchie. The wine is made with a modest amount of new oak to allow the fruit to take center stage. These appellation wines always offer great insight into the region as a whole for the given vintage: In 2014, the RRV experienced beautiful, moderate weather with very few heat spikes or rain events. Thus, we have a wine with great richness and silkiness, yet still possessing firm structure. Notes of brioche, yellow peach, panna cotta and white flowers greet the nose, while flavors of tangy limeade, pear nectar, lemon zest are buoyed by a savory and mouth-watering mix of acid and minerals on the finish. Peak drinking window: 2016 through 2026.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Alcohol: 14.6%

TA: 5.7g/L

pH: 3.55

RS: 2.0g/L

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