

Gregory James - Winemaker Notes

2014 Hawk Hill Chardonnay

Fruit Source: Hawk Hill Vineyard

Varietal: 100% Chardonnay, Sonoma Coast AVA

Clone: 5

Harvested: 9/23/14, with 22.0 Brix

Barrel Treatment: 22% new & 78% neutral French Oak barrels

Bottled: 7/20/15

Barrel Aging: 10 months

Final Chemistry: 6.9 g/L TA, 3.23 pH. 13.6% Alcohol

Cases produced: 220

The Vineyard: Greg has been working with the Hawk Hill Vineyard for over 13 years. This Vineyard is located on a Southern facing Ridge top, high above the town of Freestone and was planted to Pinot noir and Chardonnay in 1985. There are 7 acres of Chardonnay vines planted primarily to clone 5, with a small amount of Old Wente-Hyde selection interplants. The fruit was harvested by hand, at night, to assure it would arrive at the winery cold.

Winemaking: Once harvested, the fruit was immediately transported to the winery where the fruit was whole cluster pressed with no added SO₂ and the juice was placed into a Stainless Steel tank for overnight settling. The following day, the juice was transferred to French oak barrels, and a small amount of the “golden” lees which settled to the bottom of the tank was carefully collected and distributed in each barrel. The juice was then inoculated with a select White Burgundy yeast strain and the barrels were placed into the cellar to begin its primary fermentation. Very infrequent (<1 x/ week) lees stirring during primary fermentation was performed to help maintain the crisp, cool climate varietal Chardonnay character of this fruit. The wine completed primary fermentation in 3 weeks and secondary, or malolactic fermentation over the course of 5 months. The wine remained on its lees (residual yeast cells) during secondary fermentation without stirring, where it was eventually “racked” off its “gross” lees to allow for natural clarification of the wine 2 months prior to bottling.

Tasting Notes: This is our first single vineyard Hawk Hill Chardonnay, and it was greatly influenced by Greg’s ongoing love affair with white Burgundian wines. Aromas of white peach pit, ginger, lemon custard and citrus blossom, combine with flavors of, apricot, hazelnut and green apple, which are all complemented by mouthwatering natural acidity and vibrant minerality.