

Gregory James - Winemaker Notes

2016 Hawk Hill Chardonnay

Fruit Source: Hawk Hill Vineyard

Varietal: 100% Chardonnay, Sonoma Coast AVA

Clone: 5

Harvested: 9/23/16, with 23.2 Brix

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

Bottled: 7/13/18

Barrel Aging: 22 months

Final Chemistry: 6.9 g/L TA, 3.45 PH. 14.1% Alcohol

Cases produced: 65

The Vineyard: 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 a cooler climate Chardonnay and it shows by way of the leanness, bright acidity and vibrant minerality from these soils. The racy acidity, tones of grapefruit and lemon zest show best when chilled, and soften beautifully as the wine comes to ambient temperature where the wine shows hints of butter and fine oak with good viscosity on the finish.