

T O R



TOR Chardonnay Durell Vineyard, Wente Clone, 2013

Blend: 100% Wente Clone Chardonnay
Production: 250 cases
Release date: February 2015

Vintage

It is rare, and I look back now on 38 harvests, to have two vintages like 2012 and 2013 next to each other. Both would qualify in Bordeaux terms as vintages of the century. Both started early, had long and relatively even growing seasons, both had average to above average (depending on site) crop levels. Both gave us or most of us the opportunity when to pick when we wanted, which meant levels of ripeness was up to us. Ripeness is subjective in winemaking, but to us very specific. Think of that perfect peach at the farmers market. The grower made sure the tree was not over cropped, sustainably farmed, and that each peach had the opportunity to get sweet and ripe. Ripe meant the fruit was still firm, has good acid and tooth aching sweetness. Like that farmer, we chose to pick the moment just after the seeds lose their greenness and just before the clusters start to soften and lose their magic. It is a small window, and in 2013 we found it again and again. Peachy keen.

Vineyards

Durell has built a rock solid reputation for decades as one of California's premier vineyards. Our block is on the famed "Sand Hill" part of the vineyard, looking down on the Sonoma Valley. The soil is Goulding clay loam, mixed with diatomaceous earth, and millions of years ago formed a sand bar reaching into the prehistoric lake that covered the town of Sonoma. Like Kistler and a few other winemakers, we favor the "Wente Clone" in this vineyard, which is a selection of plant material that sets a small crop with small berries. The result is high skin-to-flesh ratio, great concentration of varietal character.

Winemaking

These Chardonnays were all made in a very traditional Burgundian fashion. What does that mean? For our Chardonnays we use native yeasts for primary and malolactic fermentations, we do not fine or filter the wines. We work hard to bring honest and true expressions of the vineyard to you, with the least amount of additions or subtractions.

Winemaker's Tasting Notes

As always the Durell Vineyard Chardonnay is the more gold colored of the Chardonnays and shows its California heritage in full glory. The 2013 is perhaps the biggest and richest Durell we have had since the 2007 vintage. This is very rich and silky on the palate with hazelnut, cream, brioche and a long, complex lingering finish. Though clearly drinkable now this wine should easily hold and improve over the next five years.