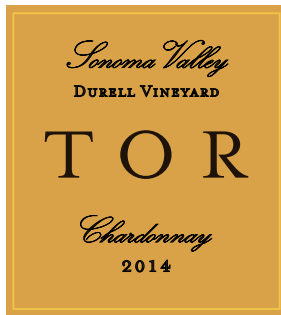


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TOR Chardonnay Durell Vineyard, Wente Clone, 2014

100% Wente Clone Chardonnay
Production: 250 cases
Release date: February 2016

Vintage

Well, yet another great vintage. The question for me is how will it fit in as time passes with the other the recent greats; 2012, 2013, and 2015. There is not a weak sister here. These are vibrant, different vintages and any one of them could go all the way to the Super Bowl of wine, whatever that is. So let's take a look at the personalities and handicap them. 2012; abundant, round rich full bodied from beginning to now: has not missed a beat. 2013; more sinew and structure, needing more time but delicious just the same from beginning but not as evolved early on as 2012. 2014; to me it is stuck someplace in the middle personality-wise between 2012 and 2013. It has more structure than 2012, more flesh than 2013. It may be a vintage like 1995, which surpassed the more headlined 1994. Dry winter, wet spring, long even growing season, easy harvest – not as abundant a crop as 2012 and 2013. Sleeper vintage that I think with time will hold its own against its good looking brothers and sisters.

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

Very Burgundian in style. Barrel fermented in small French cooperage, favoring premium three year dry aged barrels. Primary coopers – Saury, Remond and Francois Freres. Fermentations begin with native yeast strains for primary and secondary, and the wines receive the minimal amount of handling thru the aging period. Bottled unfiltered, unfiltered; we work hard to bring honest and true expression of the vineyard to you.

Winemaker's Tasting Notes

The 2014 Durell chardonnay ranks right up there with the best Durells we have ever made. This has the classic seamless, almost oily palate weight and texture to it that the best Durells have but with a thread of focus that helps to pull the intensity of the palate together. This shows mandarin oranges, stone fruits and an almost cut wet grass note to it. This is intense, rich and seamless- another classic Durell Vineyard chardonnay.