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TOR Chardonnay Hyde Vineyard, 2013

Blend: 100% Hyde Selection Wenté Clone Chardonnay
Production: 200 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

This vineyard is an extension of the man, Larry Hyde. For three decades he has had a very intimate relationship with each vine in his vineyard, and in the process has built an international reputation as one of the best growers in the world. His research papers on plant (clonal material) are reference points for our industry. He is a humble man, very dry of wit, has a good appetite for excellent food and wine, and likes the company of sincere winemakers and growers. I love his harvest parties, but even more so his grapes. We are in a small section of the vineyard in the rolling hills of Carneros, planted to what he calls his 'small cluster clone'. I stood in line for these grapes for 14 years, and I think you will agree the wait was well worth it. Not much crop from these vines, but stunning wine.

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

If not for the extra weight, length and richness you would swear this wine were a white Burgundy. The Hyde vineyard is renowned for producing Chardonnay fruit that is bracing and intense in its youth, but ages wonderfully to later exhibit layer upon layer of flavors. The 2013 Hyde Vineyard Chardonnay is a beautiful example of what the shy yielding Wenté clones could do in 2013 with its intense minerals, stone fruit and bright Meyer lemon. As great as this will be in its youth it should only be more beautiful with a few years on it.