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TOR Chardonnay Torchiana, Beresini Vineyards, 2014

100% Hyde selection Wenté 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

Torchiana is my mother's maiden name. Torchi, as we called her, was a very lovely, very talented painter and actress, who encouraged all of us young Kenwards to be creative and listen to our muse. This is my homage to her. This wine comes from a single three-acre Chardonnay vineyard Larry Hyde introduced to me in 2008. It belonged to one of his oldest friends in the Napa Valley, Steve Beresini, and was planted three decades ago with cuttings Larry gave Steve. We call this plant material – Hyde Selection Wenté Clone (Old Vine chardonnay). Today it produces a minuscule crop, usually between one to two tons per acre, with clusters half the normal size.

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

Now in our sixth vintage with the Beresini vineyard, I think I understand what this vineyard provides every year. The Torchiana is an amazing mix of bright acids and minerality (same soils as the Hyde and Hyde vineyard bud wood) but with a more intense, dense, rich, mid-palate. This has the great tropical flavors - as well as a floral note to it - but there is always a depth and richness to this wine that is so rare to find.