
LIOCO

Chardonnay Sonoma County
2011

AROMA

lemon balm, orange blossom, talc

FLAVOR

preserved lemon, kaffir lime, green cardamon

FOOD PAIRINGS

pressed sandwiches, fish & chips, crabcakes

VINIFICATION

the fruit was hand-harvested and the berries "broken" before being pressed (85% to stainless steel tanks & 15% to neutral oak). fermented on the lees with regular battonage for 10-mos. malolactic fermentation occurred naturally and finished completely. a gentle cross-flow filtration was performed prior to bottling.

SITE

a selection of complementary sonoma county vineyards compose this wine. while each site is distinct, they share a common commitment to sustainable horticulture and strident farming. our intention for this wine is to express, as transparently as possible, the unique character of this region. warm days and cool nights, tempered by consistent oceanic fog, yield rich chardonnays balanced by brisk acidity.

NOTES

the 2011 "soco" is a bellweather wine for us. we've always pursued the purest expression of place and vintage in our wines. historically we achieved this by fermenting the whites in 100% stainless steel. in 2011, with new winemaker john raytek at the helm, we incorporated some neutral oak into the cellar. gasp! rest assured, the wine neither smells or tastes of oak. it's all about texture—texture reminiscent of our favorite \$30+ wines in the macon. the telltale notes of lemon peel and crushed rock are delivered with the kind of precision found only in the coolest years. and 2011 was cool. and wet. and challenging on all fronts. and yet...as is often the case in burgundy, or in the loire, these otherwise challenging years can deliver wines of tremendous transparency. what may be lacking in sheer weight is made right by a mainline injection of stoney minerality. the kind of mineral that the usually abundant california sun hides behind an orgy of fruit. this freakishly cool vintage necessitated longer hang times—always a good/bad scenario. the good: more developed flavors. the bad: more vulnerability to rot. we began harvesting the warmest sites (from dry creek) in the middle of september and continued picking all the way into early october (from the russian river valley). we enrolled extra hands on the sorting table to ensure that only the best clusters made it to the press. the extra work paid dividends. that may be the story of 2011: those who worked the hardest made the best wines.

internal notes from the cellar: our favorite components of this wine (which is a blend of three big tanks and a series of older hermitage barrels that came from the same cooper used by the late, great didier dagueneau) were the barrel fermented lots. not the tank lots! look for a higher percentage of barrel-fermented wine in 2012.

DETAILS

county: sonoma
winemaker: john raytek
production: 4800
ph: 3.58
brix: 22
total acidity: 6.0 g/l
residual sugar: 0.08 g/l
alcohol: 13.1%

