
LIOCO

2018 Howard Family Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Chardonnay

AROMA

starfruit, chalk, green papaya

FLAVOR

pineapple rind, crushed stone, pain au levain

FOOD PAIRINGS

ham + gruyere bread pudding, tuna fish salad w/ sesame oil, scalloped potatoes

VINIFICATION

1.02 tons hand-harvested on Sept. 22. Fermented on wild yeasts in neutral oak barriques and puncheons, with a slow malolactic fermentation completing. Aged on lees in barrel for 11 months, then racked to steel for five more months of anaerobic aging. Cross-flow-filtered prior to bottling.

SITE

This choice little "home vineyard" is tucked into a fog-choked valley four miles from the cold Pacific Ocean. It grows on colluvial soils of golden sand and calcareous deposits. Clonal material is Old Wente planted in the early 1970s. This uniquely temperate region is defined by its relationship to the sea, reliable fog, and coastal redwoods.

NOTES

We weren't looking for another Chardonnay vineyard in the Santa Cruz Mountains when our friend Bradley Brown of Big Basin Vineyards called to "...chat about an opportunity." He described a home vineyard (quite literally someone's front yard) in the Aptos-Corralitos zone with a 1970s planting of dry-farmed, old Wente Chardonnay (?), organically farmed by Prudy Foxx. Bradley knew which levers to pull when pitching us. We drove down there and put a contract together with our boot treads still packed with soil. There are few places as difficult to farm organically as a site 4 miles from the sea that gets constantly lashed by fog. It will seemingly always be a race to achieve ripeness here before the botrytis sets in, but tasting this 2018 Howard determines us. This wine is more opulent than La Marisma, with higher pitches of jasmine flower and passion fruit commingling with barely-ripe stone fruits. The briny seashell notes, characteristic of the best wines from this area, are background players right now but may emerge to center stage with bottle age.

DETAILS

Vineyard: Howard Family	Total acidity: 6.8 g/L
Appellations: Santa Cruz Mountains	Residual sugar: 0.7 g/L
County: Santa Cruz	Alcohol: 13.6%
Winemaker: Drew Huffine	Yield: 3 T/acre
Production: 155 cases	Clones: Wente
Anticipated maturity: 2021-2026	Harvest date: 9/22/2019
pH: 3.34	Bottling date: 2/4/2020
Brix: 22.2	

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