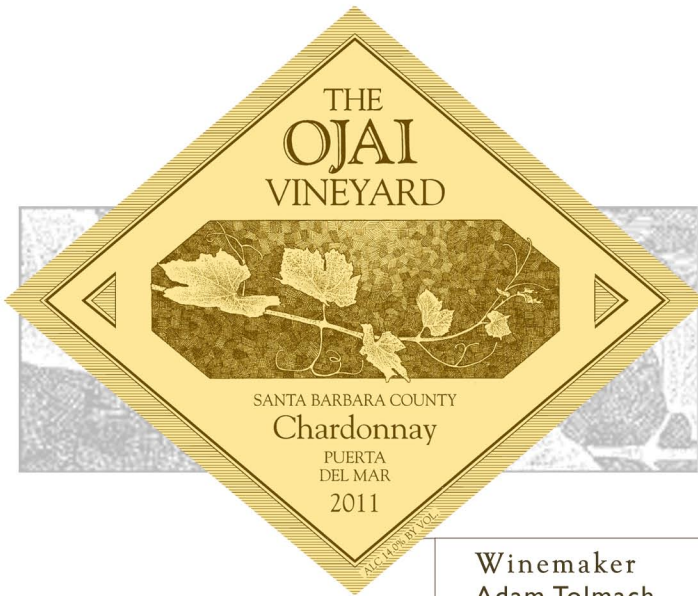


2011 Chardonnay | Puerta Del Mar, Santa Barbara County



Winemaker
Adam Tolmach



Blend: 100% Chardonnay
Vineyard: Puerta Del Mar
AVA: Santa Ynez Valley
Alcohol: 14%
Vinification: 100% Neutral French Oak
Barrel Aging: 10 Months
Total Production: 161 Cases



Winemaker's Notes

Puerta de Mar (literally: "Door to the Sea") is a new vineyard that we are excited about! Planted ½ mile east of highway 1 just outside of Lompoc, it trumps Kick On Ranch as our coolest vineyard site. It is located so far west that the original creators of the Santa Rita Hills appellation didn't think it was possible to ripen grapes here, thus it wasn't included within the growing region's boundaries. Call it ignorance or the influence of global warming, they were clearly wrong! Admittedly the pinot noir and chardonnay grown here ripen late, but the wines are better for it and possess an admirable subtlety that I attribute to the ocean's ever-present influence.

Southern California has a reputation of always having the same weather, but it is actually quite variable—one summer might be hot and the next foggy—and that greatly affects the grape's composition and ultimately how the wine will taste. The wines in 2011 show off a cool vintage, giving us delicacy, perfume and drive.

Ok, slow down, take a deep breath and relax. This wine is subtle and if you are in a hurry you're going to miss a real gem. At this point the 2011 Puerta del Mar chardonnay has a delicate and alluring aroma of violets with a bit of stoniness, but those patient enough will see the wine blossom into something very special as it ages. My test for restrained cool climate white wines is the Sunday chicken dinner: a tender three pound free range chicken, oven roasted at 425 degrees with peeled potatoes and mushroom gravy. This Puerta del Mar Chardonnay shined through the meal offering a rich lemony character and a juicy fresh, mouth watering flavor.

Press Reviews

Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar

"Light yellow. Musky aromas of orange pith, gingery spices and sweet butter, with a chalky mineral overtone. Tangy, dry and tactile on the palate, with zesty lift and firm mineral bite to its fresh citrus and orchard fruit flavors and a hint of honeysuckle. The stony, linear finish is crisp, dry and impressively long. No excess fat on these bones." - JR 92

Antonio Galloni's Vinous

"The 2011 Chardonnay Puerta Del Mar is pretty, brisk and very nicely done. Lemon peel, white flowers and a hint of spices are supported by precise veins of acidity in a Chardonnay that shows a lovely combination of juiciness and energy." - AG 91