

2021 CHARDONNAY RANCHO ONTIVEROS

SANTA MARIA VALLEY

TASTING NOTE

This 2021 bottling is our first from Rancho Ontiveros, and we couldn't be more excited about this newcomer. Everything here is very Chardonnay, in a classically proportioned way. You find vivid earthy scents of wet stones, along with white nectarine, dried apples, shortbread, and raw nut flesh. Little teases of tropicality are in the mix too. It hits the palate with a crack and quickly expands into a full textured mid-palate bound by ropes of minerality. Again you find the white stone fruits, along with candied lemon, juicy apple, then white pepper and a coolness of mint and stones in the finish. It drinks like excellent Macon with its corseted sense of curvature and mineral buoyance.

VINTAGE & WINEMAKING

We were looking to add another Chardonnay to our repertoire, but something that would be different. The Rancho Ontiveros fruit came up as a possibility, but it was the Wente clone of Chardonnay. Adam sorta avoided that clone over the years—it's a richer clone that's responsible for a lot of thick, tropical California Chardonnay. But grown in the cool Santa Maria Valley and harvested relatively early—that could be a different thing, Adam thought.

We approached the fruit a bit differently. We still fermented the wine in French oak barrels (mostly neutral, with a few new), but once the wine was dry, we transferred it to stainless steel tanks to age on its lees until bottling. The idea was that aging in tank would preserve freshness and keep the wine tight, whereas barrel aging would take the wine into its rich potential. We were so happy with our results that we'll carry forward with that approach in the coming years.

VINEYARD

Rancho Ontiveros is another cool, windswept site in the Santa Maria Valley. It's roughly two miles inland from Presqu'île, nestled amongst gently rolling hills in the southern pocket of the valley. It's a bit higher elevation than the rest of the valley (over 700'), so it's especially raked by cool Santa Maria wind.

BLEND 100% Chardonnay

VINEYARDS Rancho Ontiveros Vineyard

AVA Santa Maria Valley

ALCOHOL 13.0%

VINIFICATION barrel fermented, aged on lees in stainless steel tanks

BARREL AGING 9 months

TOTAL PRODUCTION 606 Cases

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