



2020 CHARDONNAY

PUERTA DEL MAR

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

TASTING NOTE:

Puerta Del Mar Chardonnay tends to be paradoxical. Cobbling together delicacy and power, plus land-meets-sea aromatics, it's confounding as it is delicious. For this special bottling we both stress and enrich the wine through our approach to élevage. Longer barrel aging reveals the profoundly earthy character of this fruit, while the new wood accentuates contour on the palate.

This 2020 bottling shows all the chalk and seafoam character of this site, along with exotic fragrances of nutmeg, cardamom and lemongrass, plus delicate streaks of toasty pastry. It's voluminous up front with powerful white stone fruits, vanilla cream and spice. A thin lacquer of caramel drives the richness further. But all of that coexists with a fresh lemony verve and a lattice of crystalline minerals. This vintage provided an immediacy that the 2019 didn't have, but it will age gracefully for several years at least.

VINTAGE & WINEMAKING:

2020 was a steadily warm and sometimes hot vintage. That's less significant out at Puerta Del Mar, where the nearby ocean is constantly moderating the heat. After whole-cluster crushing and settling overnight, the juice was racked ferment in barrel with native yeast. Malolactic fermentation was spontaneous and slow. Out of seven barrels total, three were new—all lightly toasted Francois Freres barrels with very tight grain. The wine aged on its lees for 16 months without sulfur added until bottling. The wine was unfiltered and unfined.

We used to bottle Puerta Del Mar Chardonnay after 11 months in barrel. In 2017 we experimented with aging a couple of new barrels of this wine over-vintage, bottling it in its second winter in barrel, and we loved the results so much that now we make all our Puerta Del Mar with this way. The extra five months in barrel is what shapes this wine most, but that's coupled with the more porous nature of the 43% new oak barrels (which haven't been plugged up with tartrate crystals from prior use). It's a more oxidative approach with a profound effect, tempering the sense of sun-drenched fruit and providing a more broad expression of the intense minerality that you find in this cool vineyard. This nudges the wine toward austerity, but the new wood fills in the negative space and the result is an elegant, shapely Chardonnay with strong underlying verve.

BLEND 100% Chardonnay

VINEYARDS Puerta Del Mar

AVA Santa Barbara County

ALCOHOL 13.0%

VINIFICATION barrel fermented in French oak, 43% new

BARREL AGING 16 months on lees

TOTAL PRODUCTION 159 Cases

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THE
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