



# 2022 CHARDONNAY

## RANCHO ONTIVEROS

### SANTA MARIA VALLEY

#### TASTING NOTE

This 2022 bottling is our second Chardonnay from Rancho Ontiveros, a cool site in the hills of the Santa Maria Valley. The climate here is ideal for tempering the richness that the Wente clone of Chardonnay can express. Still, the warm and low-yielding 2022 vintage gave powerfully flavored Chardonnay.

The nose hints at richness with scents of poached pear and lemon custard, plus chamomile, shortcake and warm-hued tropical elements. It's all there on the palate, which is ample and curvy upfront, animated by citrusy zip and crisp apple. It grips your palate with fine pear skin-like astringencies in the mid-palate, then leaves a fresh stony quality and tingy acidity in the finish. Just deliciously dynamic.

#### VINTAGE & WINEMAKING

Much as we're elated with how this wine turned out, 2022 was a challenging vintage. Especially for Chardonnay, with yields down by 40-50%. That low crop left little margin for error with calling the pick during a hot September, but we nailed it on ripeness.

With our first bottling from Rancho Ontiveros, the 2021, we aged the wine in stainless steel tanks to bridle the potential richness of the Wente clone fruit. In 2022 the yields were too low for us to fill a tank, so we fermented and aged the wine in neutral French oak barrels instead.

There is a heightened sense of richness compared to the 2021 bottling, but these are two very different vintages in terms of yield and weather. It probably makes more sense to attribute what's here to vintage, rather than the influence of barrel aging. In any case, this Chardonnay gives a delicious density of flavor that belies the 12.8% alcohol.

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**BLEND** 100% Chardonnay

**VINEYARDS** Rancho Ontiveros Vineyard

**AVA** Santa Maria Valley

**ALCOHOL** 13.0%

**VINIFICATION** barrel fermented with native yeast

**BARREL AGING** 9 months in neutral French oak barrels

**TOTAL PRODUCTION** 309 Cases

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