

GARY FARRELL

VINEYARDS & WINERY

2020 DURELL VINEYARD CHARDONNAY SONOMA VALLEY

Vineyards

Originally planted in 1979 by Ed Durell, this famous vineyard is located in the southwestern foothills of the Sonoma Valley, north of the San Pablo Bay and east of the Petaluma Wind Gap. The site is characterized partly by its Region II climate, where conditions are moderated by the Bay and the Pacific Ocean effects, making it ideal for cool-climate Chardonnay and Pinot Noir grapes. This block of Chardonnay is planted to an Old Wente selection, which can vary significantly depending on its growing conditions. The rocky, volcanic soils at Durell Vineyard create a challenging environment for the vines' root system, yielding very small grape clusters that have tremendous concentration and power.

Vintage

What an interesting year 2020 was around the world, and here in wine country as well. The growing season began with one of the driest winters in memory, and certainly the driest February in recorded history. The dry weather continued through the spring months and even into summer, leaving the vines with very little soil moisture to maintain a healthy canopy. Water stress can actually create beautifully concentrated wines, and that's precisely what we're observing. Budbreak and flowering began a couple of weeks ahead of the previous season, indicating an early onset of harvest. The summer weather was relatively mild, with very few heat spikes, so the vines soaked up the sun, producing a beautifully balanced crop with small to moderately sized clusters. Moving into late summer, veraison was early, but the weather and the crop were looking pretty close to ideal. In the middle of August, wildfires caused a number of interruptions and cut the harvest short by a great deal, but neither the winery nor the vineyards suffered damage.

Winemaking

The grapes were harvested at 22.4° Brix, in the cool morning hours to preserve freshness and fruit integrity, then whole cluster pressed using a modified Champagne program to gently press the grapes yielding beautiful, fluffy lees. After pressing, the juice was chilled to 45°F in tank, and allowed to settle for 24 hours before inoculating with Montrachet yeast. The wine was then transferred to 35% new, light toast French oak barrels and Puncheons (François Frères & DAMY), with just the right amount of light, fluffy, creamy lees for a healthy fermentation. After 8 months of aging, each barrel was carefully evaluated and the most elegantly structured wines were selected for this beautiful single vineyard wine.

Tasting Notes

Delicate aromas of climbing flowers and perfume introduce this offering from the esteemed Durell vineyard. An essence of oily citrus zest and crushed Kaffir lime leaves infuse vibrancy, while hints of shortbread cookies and pie dough add depth and complexity. The palate is lively and superbly balanced upon entry, with an underlying element of minerality that is a hallmark of this unique site.

Appellation

Sonoma Valley

Vineyards

Durell Vineyard

Composition

100% Chardonnay

Fermentation & Aging

10 months in 35% new
French oak

Alcohol

13.5%

pH / T.A.

3.46 / 6.1 gm/L

Production

140 Cases

Bottling Date

July 21, 2021

Release Date

May 2023

Retail Price

\$70