

GARY FARRELL

VINEYARDS & WINERY

2021 BACIGALUPI VINEYARD CHARDONNAY — SPIRIT OF 76 RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY

Vineyards

In 1956, Helen and Charles Bacigalupi purchased 121 acres of prime vineyard land along Westside Road, in the heart of the Russian River Valley. In 1964, they were among the first in the area to plant Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. The Bacigalupi family grapes garnered fame in 1976 when they were used to make Chateau Montelena's winning entry in that year's Paris Tasting. The oldest vines that remain on the property were planted in 1967 and 1975 on St. George rootstock and are a mix of head trained and cordon-trained vines. The latter is one of the primary components of our Bacigalupi Chardonnay blend, while this limited release instead, comes from the young replants that replaced some of the original old vines. These young vines appear to tap into the wisdom of the old vines that once occupied the same soil because the energy and vitality of this wine was so good that we decided to call it "The Spirit of '76", honoring the famous 1976 Paris tasting.

Vintage

2021 was a spectacular vintage, especially considering the challenges of the past few years. It was a drought year, so Mother Nature was responsible for trimming yields and producing a plentiful and beautifully balanced crop. This was a nice contrast to previous drought years when the crop was very small, and the wines were more muscular. In 2021, the clusters were medium in size and the berries were plump with a good number of seeds, excellent skin to juice ratio and beautiful acidity. The summer months gave us beautiful ripening weather with very few heat spikes, allowing the grapes to ripen evenly, while having time to develop lots of flavor. Veraison began in mid to late July, and the weather until harvest was perfectly moderate, yielding excellent hang time and world-class wines.

Winemaking

The grapes were harvested at ~24° Brix in the cool morning hours to preserve freshness and fruit integrity, then hand sorted and whole cluster pressed using a gentle, modified Champagne press program tailored specifically to the qualities of the fruit. After pressing, the juice was chilled to 45°F in tank and allowed to settle for 24 hours before inoculating with Montrachet yeast. The resulting juice was left in tank to cold-settle overnight before transferring to a single one-year-old 500-litre French Oak Puncheon (light toast DAMY) for fermentation and aging, where it remained for 10 months on its primary lees until it was time to bottle in July. The wine was racked off the primary lees only once, just before bottling, and remains unfiltered, hence the hazy appearance and super silky texture.

Tasting Notes

Originating from iconic lineage, this superbly expressive Chardonnay flaunts aromas of lemon blossom, hazelnut, Bay Laurel, jasmine and a hint of lemon icing. The unfiltered qualities unfold on the palate into a rich viscosity and superbly silky texture that is enhanced with flavors of ripe nectarine, loquat, lemongrass, nutmeg and finger lime peel. The delicious creaminess lingers on the palate with juicy acidity and a sprinkle of spice.

Appellation

Russian River Valley

Vineyards

Bacigalupi Vineyard

Composition

100% Chardonnay

Fermentation & Aging

10 months in a single one-year-old
French oak Puncheon

Alcohol

14.1%

pH / T.A.

3.29 / 6.7 gm/L

Production

55 Cases

Bottling Date

July 20, 2022

Release Date

May 2024

Retail Price

\$75