

GARY FARRELL

VINEYARDS & WINERY

2021 LA RINCONADA VINEYARD CHARDONNAY STA. RITA HILLS

Vineyards

Planted in 1997, the La Rinconada Vineyard sits adjacent to Sanford & Benedict, and contains 12 clones within 20 vineyard blocks. La Rinconada is primarily planted to Pinot Noir but is complemented by some very special Chardonnay vines. The success of these sites depends on the maritime influences of the Pacific Ocean. The movement of fog and cooling winds up valley and the soil, a living medium of minerals and organic material, is quite unique to this growing region. A byproduct of receding seas, river-deposited particles, landslides and the slow weathering of ancient stone, which in the Sta. Rita Hills AVA includes shale, serpentine, and sandstone. The lower portion of La Rinconada sits on sandy loam, but transitions to clay loam, diatomaceous earth and shale on the hills closer to Sanford & Benedict.

Vintage

2021 was a spectacular vintage. It was a drought year, so Mother Nature was responsible for trimming yields and producing a plentiful and beautifully balanced crop. 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 21.8-22° 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 30% new and 70% one to three-year old neutral French Oak Barrels (light toast Francois Freres) and a 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, 2022. The wines were racked off the primary lees only once, just before bottling.

Tasting Notes

A dichotomy of cool, coastal, and warm, ripe characteristics is on display in this chardonnay from the Central Coast. Lemon-driven citrus intermingles with pineapple and tropical fruits, taking you on a journey to where the fog meets sun and joyful flavor abounds. The lighter, supple palate unwinds slowly to reveal a hint of pleasing salinity through the long finish.

Appellation

Sta. Rita Hills

Vineyards

La Rinconada Vineyard

Composition

100% Chardonnay

Fermentation & Aging

10 months in 35% new
French oak

Alcohol

14.2%

pH / T.A.

3.24 / 7.2 gm/L

Production

387 Cases

Bottling Date

July 15, 2022

Release Date

September 2024

Retail Price

\$65