

# DRAGONETTE



## 2016 CHARDONNAY, STA. RITA HILLS



### 100% CHARDONNAY

#### VINEYARDS & CLONES

Donnachadh (548 & 96) - 35%

Spear (Wente & 96) - 35%

Radian (95) - 15%

Duvarita (548 & 96) - 10%

Rita's Crown (76) - 5%

#### APPELLATION

Sta. Rita Hills

#### YIELD (TONS PER ACRE)

2.68-3.72 TPA (Ave. 3.15)

#### HARVEST DATES

Aug. 24 - Sept. 21

#### FERMENTATION

100% Barrel Fermented

Native yeasts

#### COOPERAGE

Oak barrels (228L, 350L, 400L)

(25% New French)

#### AGING

16 Months on the lees

#### BOTTLED

January 8, 2018

ALCOHOL: 14.2%

CASES PRODUCED: 325

SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$40

### PHILOSOPHY

We strive to create Chardonnays of textural purity, complexity and balance with classic tension. Complexity and balance are achieved by meticulous attention to detail in the vineyard, where each vineyard block is managed for appropriate canopy and proper yields. Tension and textural purity begin in the vineyard with low yields and balanced acidity at harvest. Native yeast fermentation in clean oak cooperage and aging on the lees aid in preserving the purity of texture. We age our wines on their lees, without racking, and constant topping. Moreover, each wine is bottled only after sufficient time in barrel to permit ideal evolution.

### THE VINEYARDS

**DONNACHADH** (organic) - Sandy river terrace and adjacent steep hillside of clay loam and rocks. Regularly buffeted by intense, cool, maritime winds. Solid wines, full, with good length.

**SPEAR** (organic) - is located in the Hwy 246 corridor with a sandy section (Wente clone) and a steep hillside of sandy clay loam. Good volume, spicy, complex wines.

**RADIAN** (sustainable) - dramatic steep windy hillsides at far western edge of appellation, soils of sandy loam and diatomaceous earth. Very mineral wines.

**DUVARITA** (certified biodynamic) - south facing hillside of sandy soils west of Sta. Rita Hills. Small canopy, small bunches of intense fruit.

**RITA'S CROWN** (sustainable) - high elevation, very windy west-southwest block. Sandy loam and diatomaceous soils. Low vigor grapes with tropical flavors and incredible acidity.

### THE VINTAGE

2016 was another in a string of terrific vintages in Santa Barbara. We had another early budbreak, and (unlike 2015) perfect weather during set, allowing for a strong, balanced crop. May, June and July were quite warm and ripening was fairly quick; however, an unseasonably cool August slowed the vines considerably. For the winemaker it was almost ideal, as the grapes were able to complete ripening slowly, without heat spikes, and the grapes maintained excellent acidity. Over a series of cool mornings, we picked each block at near- perfect ripeness and balance. The wines have great fruit character, excellent depth, with refreshing natural acidity.

### OUR WINEMAKING

We picked the individual blocks in separate passes, and fermented them separately. At least one of us was present at every pick to hand-sort the clusters in the field. Within hours, we gently pressed the grapes and transferred the juice directly to barrels for primary fermentation, which took place with native yeasts and temperature control. The wine saw partial malolactic fermentation and was aged on the lees in French oak barrels (25% new) until just prior to blending, a gentle cross flow filtration and bottling.

### PROPRIETORS/WINEMAKERS

John Dragonette, Steve Dragonette, & Brandon Sparks-Gillis