

DRAGONETTE



2020 CHARDONNAY, STA. RITA HILLS



100% CHARDONNAY

VINEYARDS & CLONES

Rita's Crown (76, 95) - 85%

Duvarita (548, 76) - 15%

APPELLATION

Sta. Rita Hills

HARVEST DATES

September 14, 17 & 21

FERMENTATION

100% Barrel Fermented

Native yeasts

COOPERAGE

French Oak barrels (5% New)

AGING

16 Months on the lees (no *battonage*)

BOTTLED

January 21, 2022

ALCOHOL: 13.6%

CASES PRODUCED: 160

SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$40

PHILOSOPHY

We seek to identify exceptional vineyard sites and farming partners in order to source and grow the finest fruit in Santa Barbara. Vineyard blocks are individually managed for appropriate canopy, proper yield, and ideal pick date. We then shepherd this fruit into wine with our own hands. Wines are barreled and aged on their lees until they reach their full potential. The goal is wines of complexity, balance, and textural purity that are also true to both vintage and place. For Chardonnay, we believe the cool climate of Santa Barbara is perfect for crafting wines with dramatic aromas and flavors balanced with minerality and classic tension from appropriate natural acidity. This blend is constructed from individual diverse components with the aim of creating complexity, depth and harmony.

THE VINEYARDS

RITA'S CROWN (uncertified organic w/ some biodynamics) - Dramatic, steep, high altitude (650-820 feet above sea level) blocks rich in diatomaceous earth face south and southwest and look down upon the historic core of the Sta. Rita Hills. Midday sunshine provides ripening, while daily fog and cold ocean breezes help preserve acidity. Wines display tropical flavors with a tremendous mineral spine. DUVARITA (CERTIFIED BIODYNAMIC) - Gentle south facing slope of sandy soils; composting and regenerative no till builds organic material, tiny plants yield small bunches of highly concentrated fruit with open knit texture and purity of flavor.

THE VINTAGE

2020 was an extraordinary year in Santa Barbara. We fortunately avoided the disastrous firestorms that devastated many of the other major wine growing areas in California. We also largely avoided the effects of extreme heat waves, due to careful canopy management, constant monitoring of the vineyards, dropping of damaged fruit, and picking on precise dates with vigorous field sorting.

Winter was cold delaying budbreak. A cool, wet Spring tamed vigor and extended flowering. Yields were initially average to above average. Summer (July to mid-August) began a pattern of classic SRH days - cool, foggy mornings, warm middays, then cooling winds until sunset. Mid-August saw the first of four punishing heat events. Fortunately, each heat wave was interspersed with cool periods which allowed the vines to reset. We picked the Chardonnay in between the heat waves, beginning in mid to late September under ideal (cool, foggy) conditions.

OUR WINEMAKING

We picked individual blocks in separate passes with field sorting. Within hours, the grapes were gently pressed, the juice settled, then put down to barrels for primary fermentation, which took place with native yeasts. The wine sees native (partial) malolactic fermentation in barrel and aging on the lees in French oak barrels (5% new) for 16 months, before cross flow filtration and bottling.

PROPRIETORS/WINEMAKERS

John Dragonette, Steve Dragonette, & Brandon Sparks-Gillis

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