

DRAGONETTE



2023 CHARDONNAY, BLACK LABEL, STA. RITA HILLS



100% CHARDONNAY

VINEYARDS & CLONES

33% - Bentrock (76) (SIP certified sustainable)

33% - Radian (548) (SIP certified sustainable)

33% - Rita's Crown (76) (certified organic)

APPELLATION

Sta. Rita Hills

YIELD (TONS PER ACRE)

1.98 to 3.03 TPA

HARVEST DATES

October 5, 10, 15

FERMENTATION

100% Barrel Fermented

Native yeasts

COOPERAGE

French Oak barrels (83% new)

AGING

18 Months on the lees (no *battonage*)

BOTTLED

May 1, 2025

ALCOHOL: 14.3%

CASES PRODUCED: 140

SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$105

PHILOSOPHY

We seek to identify exceptional vineyard sites and farming partners 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. 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 Sta. Rita Hills is ideal for crafting wines with dramatic aromas and flavors balanced with exceptional natural acidity.

This small production, reserve level wine is a blend of our favorite barrels, each selected for its outstanding depth, concentration, complexity, and engaging personality.

THE VINEYARDS

BENTROCK: Dramatic, north facing block overlooking the Santa Ynez River to the south and Radian to the west. Rocky, windy site gives wines of intense power and length, interjected with complex mineral notes and structure. **RADIAN:** Dramatic, west facing block high above the valley floor stares directly at the mighty, cold, windy Pacific. Very low yields and thick skins combine to make powerful wines, with intense minerals and high acidity. **RYTA'S CROWN:** Steep, south-southwest facing blocks regularly visited by high winds and fog. Low vigor soils of sandy and clay loams with diatomaceous earth produce grapes with tropical fruits, chalky minerals, and great natural acidity.

THE VINTAGE

2023 was an excellent vintage, a product of good rainfall, a cool spring, and occasional short periods of moderate heat in the summer before an ideal September allowed measured, even ripening. A wet winter cleansed and supercharged the soil with moisture for the growing season, and canopies grew strong. May and June were generally cool, and flowering was extended, but set was solid across grape varieties. July turned warm (but not hot), which accelerated growth nicely. August turned cooler with occasional warm periods (August 5-7, 15-16 & 28-30). Hurricane Hilary (which swamped the desert southwest from August 16-20) only brought high humidity to the Central Coast. September turned cool, and Labor Day itself was the coolest in years. The rest of September and October were essentially mild, and Chardonnay grapes slowly ripened until they could be picked deliberately on cool foggy mornings in early to mid-October.

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 malolactic fermentation in barrel and aging on the lees (without stirring) in French oak (83% new) for 18 months, before blending and bottling.

PROPRIETORS/WINEMAKERS

John Dragonette, Steve Dragonette, & Brandon Sparks-Gillis