

DRAGONETTE



2023 CHARDONNAY, RITA'S CROWN VINEYARD



100% CHARDONNAY

CLONES
76 (2 Blocks)

APPELLATION
Sta. Rita Hills

YIELD (TONS PER ACRE)
1.98 - 2.71 TPA
Average: 2.35 TPA

HARVEST DATES
October 5, 10

FERMENTATION
100% Barrel Fermented
Native yeasts
Native MLF (in barrel)

COOPERAGE
100% French Oak barrels (40% New)

AGING
16 Months on the lees (no *battonage*)

BOTTLED
March 26, 2025

ALCOHOL: 14.3%

CASES PRODUCED: 225

SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$75

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 textual 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 by exceptional natural acidity.

We bottle single vineyard wines when wines from a particular vineyard express a unique character or sense of “place” and yet are complete wines of balance, harmony and interest.

THE VINEYARD

Rita's Crown is located at one of the highest points in the Sta. Rita Hills, adjacent to such famous sites as Mt Carmel and Sea Smoke. Farming is certified organic with some biodynamics (not BD certified). Soils are sandy and clay loam with diatomaceous earth. Chardonnay comes from two steep west/southwest facing blocks which are regularly buffeted by high winds. The low vigor soils produce a small canopy, small yields, and a long growing season. The wines here tend to show beautiful tropical fruits, balanced by strong notes of 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 and 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 saw complete (native) malolactic fermentation in barrel and was aged on the lees in French oak barrels (44% new) for 18 months before bottling.

PROPRIETORS/WINEMAKERS

John Dragonette, Steve Dragonette, & Brandon Sparks-Gillis