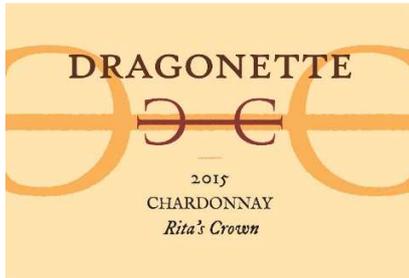


DRAGONETTE



2015 CHARDONNAY, RITA'S CROWN VINEYARD



100% CHARDONNAY

CLONES

76

APPELLATION

Sta. Rita Hills

YIELD (TONS PER ACRE)

Approx. 2.72 TPA

HARVEST DATES

August 24 - 30

FERMENTATION

100% Barrel Fermented

Native yeasts

COOPERAGE

100% French Oak

20% New

AGING

16 Months on the lees

BOTTLED

February 22, 2017

ALCOHOL: 14.0%

CASES PRODUCED: 220

SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$60

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.

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 vineyard is located at one of the highest point in the Sta. Rita Hills, adjacent to such famous sites as Mt Carmel and Sea Smoke. The soils in are a mix of sandy and clay loams with a good amount of diatomaceous earth. We obtain Chardonnay from Block 16, a steep, west-southwest facing block above the monastery, which is regularly buffeted by high winds. The low vigor soils produce a small canopy, small yields and a long slow growing season. The wines here tend to show some beautiful tropical fruits, but are typically balanced and energetic, with strong notes of chalky minerals and ample acidity providing lift and cut.

THE VINTAGE

2015 will be forever known as the great drought year; the last in a historically dry five-year period. Due to early warmth, 2015 had an extremely early budbreak, and although we avoided frosts, we had cool windy weather in May, resulting in very poor set, with fewer and smaller clusters. After mid-June, we had constant warm to hot temperatures up until harvest which commenced as early as the end of July. Soil toxicity (from salt buildup) and poor set led to low yields; in fact, the lowest we have seen. What fruit was on the vines, however, received all of the plants' energy, resulting in deep, concentrated and remarkably flavorful wines. 2015 is proving to be a great vintage for quality, though there is not much to go around.

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 (20% new) until just prior to blending a gentle, cross flow filtration and bottling.

PROPRIETORS/WINEMAKERS

John Dragonette, Steve Dragonette, & Brandon Sparks-Gillis