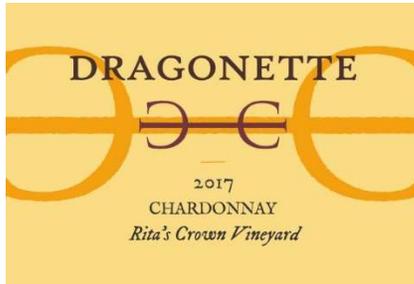


DRAGONETTE



2017 CHARDONNAY, RITA'S CROWN VINEYARD



100% CHARDONNAY

CLONE

76

APPELLATION

Sta. Rita Hills

YIELD (TONS PER ACRE)

2.08 TPA

HARVEST DATE

September 6

FERMENTATION

100% Barrel Fermented

Native yeasts

Native MLF (in barrel)

COOPERAGE

100% French Oak (228L & 350L barrels)

40% New

AGING

16 Months on the lees (no *battonage*)

BOTTLED

March 18, 2019

ALCOHOL: 14.2%

CASES PRODUCED: 200

SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$65

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 stirring or racking, with 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 points in the Sta. Rita Hills, adjacent to such famous sites as Mt Carmel and Sea Smoke. The soils are a mix of sandy and clay loams with a good amount of diatomaceous earth. We obtain Chardonnay from 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

2017 saw the first significant winter rains in some time, with extreme deluges in January and February. Despite the rain, vigor was normal due to a cool spring. Poor weather at set lead to a smaller than average crop. Summer was warm, even hot at times, but in most evenings, the cool down allowed grapes to retain acidity. August days were relatively even. Unfortunately, a massive Labor Day heatwave sent the mercury soaring over 110 for several days in early September. We managed to carefully pick around the heat; some grapes were picked before, while others were held until the plants could rebalance. The ability to selectively pick was crucial in producing wines with plenty of natural acidity and structure, which we were pleased to accomplish.

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 native malolactic fermentation and was aged on the lees in French oak barrels (40% new). The wine was given a gentle cross flow filtration before bottling.

PROPRIETORS/WINEMAKERS

John Dragonette, Steve Dragonette, & Brandon Sparks-Gillis

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