



ARISTA

2018 RITCHIE VINEYARD CHARDONNAY

Russian River Valley

VINEYARD NOTES

Kent Ritchie has owned and farmed his namesake vineyard since the early 1970's. The vineyard is located just off of River Road at the intersection of Eastside Road and Trenton Road. The location is unique because it sits on a bench at the confluence of the Russian River, the Santa Rosa Plain, and the Laguna de Santa Rosa. Each of these unique geological characteristics influences the "terroir" of the Ritchie Vineyard. The vineyard's proximity to the Pacific Ocean exposes it to the cool effect of the coastal fog yet at the same time the site's location allows for ample sunlight once the fog has burned off around noon. The well-drained, sandy, Goldridge Soils are ideal for growing Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Finally, the vineyard is planted to, predominately, the Old Wente Selection of Chardonnay which is highly coveted for its low yields and ability to produce an intensely flavored and aromatic wine. Kent Ritchie is truly a great guy and this is absolutely one of the grand vineyards of the Russian River Valley. It's an honor to work with such an iconic vineyard.

WINEMAKING

Cold grapes arrive at the winery early in the morning after having been picked at night. Grape clusters are sorted by hand and gently transferred as whole clusters directly into our press to undergo an extremely gentle press cycle lasting 3-4 hours. From the settling tank, the juice is moved to 60-gallon French oak barrels, where fermentation is allowed to occur naturally using only native yeast that come in from our vineyards. Limited battonage is used during the first 2-3 months of fermentation in order to encourage the development of a healthy yeast population. Once fermentation is safely underway the wine is not disturbed until the fermentation is complete, which typically takes about 10-11 months. Final blends are assembled and gently racked to stainless-steel tanks for about 4-6 months.

TASTING NOTES

Ritchie Vineyard is without a doubt included in the Grand Cru tier of Chardonnay sites in California. For nearly 50 years, Kent Ritchie has been farming this special slope in the Russian River Valley, and the resulting wines have become the subject of legend. We are beyond fortunate to work with the oldest plantings of Chardonnay in the Russian River Valley. These old vines produce a tiny crop of small-berried clusters every year, and the wines are consistently impressive for their balance and poise. The 2018 Ritchie Vineyard Chardonnay is driven by a lifted minerality. Notes of lemon zest, spiced apple, verbena, toasted brioche, and sweet cream play a supporting role. A beautiful tension carries the palate for a long, citrus-laced finish and bodes well for a decades-long potential for aging.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Vine Age: 40-45 years

Soil: Well-drained, sandy, Goldridge Soils

Clonal Composition: Old Wente Selection

Aging: 12 months fermentation and aging in barrel followed by 6 months in stainless steel

Unfined, unfiltered

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