

GARY FARRELL

VINEYARDS & WINERY

2013 DURELL VINEYARD CHARDONNAY SONOMA VALLEY

VINEYARDS

Originally planted in 1979 by Ed Durell, this famous 135-acre vineyard is located in the southwestern foothills of the Sonoma Valley, north of the San Pablo Bay and east of the Petaluma Wind Gap. The site is characterized partly by its Region II climate, where conditions are moderated by the Bay and the Pacific Ocean effects, making it ideal for cool-climate Chardonnay and Pinot Noir grapes. This block of Chardonnay is planted to an Old Wente selection, a Clone that can vary significantly depending on its growing conditions. The rocky, volcanic soils at Durell Vineyard create a challenging environment for the vines' root system, yielding very small grape clusters that have tremendous concentration and power.

VINTAGE

After the excellent 2012 harvest, growers couldn't have imagined that Mother Nature would bestow upon us yet another amazing and bountiful harvest full of clean and optimally ripened fruit. Moderate temperatures in the 80s combined with cool nights, foggy mornings and dry, sunny days allowed for slow, steady development of sugar, flavor and phenolics, while the acidity held on all the way through to maturity. Harvest began earlier than usual and kicked into full speed rather quickly as Chardonnay and Pinot Noir were ready at the same time. The season was a bit odd in comparison to previous years in that Chardonnay ripeness advanced more quickly than Pinot Noir when the order is usually quite the opposite. We scrambled to harvest as much Chardonnay as possible and then steadily began bringing in the red varietals that seemed to maintain excellent concentration, color and acidity.

WINEMAKING

The grapes were harvested at 22.9° Brix in the cool morning hours to preserve freshness and fruit integrity, then whole cluster pressed using a gentle program tailored specifically to the qualities of the tiny, concentrated Wente selection grapes. After pressing, the chemistry and percent solids were exactly as targeted, so the juice, along with all the lees, was immediately transferred to 40% new French oak (François Frères, DAMY, Cavin and Chassin) for native fermentation and 8 months of barrel aging. The barrel selection, a mixture of light and medium toast barrels and 500-L puncheons, was chosen to add subtle structure and aromatics, and to polish the finished wine without dominating its expression of place. The wines were racked off the primary lees only once, just before bottling.

TASTING NOTES

The expressive nose exudes aromas of white pear, hazelnut, tangerine, acacia blossom and a kiss of lightly toasted oak. The palate is powerful and bright, with precision and linearity on entry, then unfolds into a multilayered assortment of flavors reminiscent of limestone, succulent ripe peach and lemon curd. This wine is superbly textured and resonates on the palate with perfectly focused acidity before fanning out into a rich and tender, honeyed finish. This is one of the more unctuous wines in our Chardonnay lineup, yet its verve makes it approachable in youth and will allow it to age gracefully in the bottle.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

APPELLATION

Sonoma Valley

VINEYARDS

Durell Vineyard

COMPOSITION

100% Chardonnay

FERMENTATION & AGING

8 months in 40% new
French oak

ALCOHOL

13.8%

pH / T.A.

3.40 / 6.8gm/L

PRODUCTION

366 Cases

BOTTLING DATE

June 13, 2014

RELEASE DATE

June 2015

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE

\$55