

GARY FARRELL

VINEYARDS & WINERY

2015 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

The 2015 vintage was another great year for Russian River and Sonoma Valley wines. Every year we at Gary Farrell try to make wines that are more balanced than previous years and this was certainly a great opportunity for that. The wines are looking to have all the richness, texture, freshness, purity and intensity that we want to see, and many with alcohols that will be well below 14%. The 2015 Chardonnay crop was moderately sized and quality was excellent. Although the harvest started early, it is important to note that the entire season of vine development began early. Thus, ample hang-time was achieved, and we're finding that the wines have excellent phenolic structure, beautiful concentration, and plenty of natural acidity – especially in the vineyards that were harvested early – and perfectly balanced alcohols. In the end, Mother Nature again filled our cellar with barrels and tanks full of some of the best, most balanced wines we've ever produced.

WINEMAKING

The grapes were harvested at ~21.5° 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 35% 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

This 2015 vintage Chardonnay is the purest, most expressive wine that we have ever produced from this iconic vineyard. The small clusters and tiny berries developed intense flavors very early on in the ripening process so we decided to pick right when the flavors peaked and acidity was crisp and fresh. The expressive nose exudes aromas of toasted hazelnut, lemon zest, white peach and flower petals, with an underlying flintiness that suggests a savory wine. Rich, round and slightly nutty on entry, the mineral-driven palate unfolds with flavors of limestone, quince, Meyer lemon, earth and spice. This wine is superbly textured and resonates with perfectly focused acidity before fanning out into a rich and citrusy, honeyed finish.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

APPELLATION

Sonoma Valley

VINEYARDS

Durell Vineyard

COMPOSITION

100% Chardonnay

AGING

8 months in 35% new French oak

ALCOHOL

12.7%

pH / T.A.

3.33/ 7.1 g/L

PRODUCTION

245 cases

BOTTLING DATE

June 8, 2016

RELEASE DATE

October 2017

Retail Price

\$65