

2021 CHARDONNAY *Estate*

VINTAGE FACTS 2021

A relatively cold winter was followed by a short, dry spring in 2021. An early bloom and rain set a below average yield for the 2021 vintage. The summer was warm with an unprecedented record-breaking heatwave from June 26th - 28th reaching temperatures up to 117 degrees in certain areas. At the same time, cooler air from the ocean caused overnight temperatures to drop to 52-61 degrees. The hot daytime temperatures delayed the vine ripening until cooler weather set it. The berries on the vine were pre-veraison during the heatwave and were able to handle the extra heat. Rain in June and intermittently into the beginning of harvest saved the vines from heat stress. The ground stayed wet, so the vines didn't suffer drought stress, remaining healthy throughout the season.

Harvest started and ended slightly earlier than usual. Picking began around the first week of September and finished in mid-October. Cooler temperatures came at the perfect moment to give the fruit longer hang time on the vine and allow for more flavor, aroma, color and tannin development. The cooler nights also helped retain the natural acidities in the grapes to keep the resulting wines fresh and in balance with the sugar levels. Slightly below-average yields and no disease pressure this season made this a high-quality vintage.

THE VINEYARDS

Estate Vineyard: Planted in 1983 by Founder Jim Bernau on a south facing volcanic flow, the vineyard has 67 acres of vines at 500 to 750 feet in elevation. The first Dijon clones were planted in 1993. The Nekia and Jory soils are well drained to a depth of one and a half to six feet.

Tualatin Estate Vineyard: Established in 1973, the vineyard is covered with Laurelwood soil that formed over thousands of years on layers of wind-blown glacial silt called loess. High concentrations of rusted iron balls called pisolites riddle the top layer and are caused by the weathering of minerals in the soil.

Elton: In 2006, *Wine & Spirits* listed it as one of the five key vineyards in the new Eola-Amity Hills American Viticultural Area. In 2007, Elton Vineyard was named one of Oregon's top ten vineyards by *Wine Press Northwest*. Planted in 1983, the vineyard now includes 60 acres on east-southeast slopes of the Eola Hills. The elevation rises from 250-500 feet, and the soil is Jory and Nekia.

WINEMAKING NOTES

The focus of this wine is the combination of all of our clones in our three Estate Vineyards, the majority being Dijon clones, which are particularly suited to our cool climate. Creaminess and richness, with balanced oak, acidity and forward fruit is the goal. The grapes were picked at peak ripeness, and lightly whole cluster pressed to avoid harsh phenols. The juice was cold settled and racked to barrels where it was inoculated with selected yeast strains. Fermentation lasted approximately five weeks at 60-65° F. The barrel lees were stirred once monthly through malolactic fermentation which finished in March. Aging was sur lie until July, when racking took place via a nitrogen pushing system, Bulldog pup.

TECHNICAL DATA

Grape Type: Chardonnay

Clones: 76, 96 and Draper

Appellation: Willamette Valley

Soil Type: Jory (iron rich volcanic), Nekia (shallow iron rich volcanic), Laurelwood (windblown, glacial loess) including Pisolites and Missoula Flood sediment

Harvest Date: Sept. 25 – Oct. 8, 2021

Harvest Statistics

- **Brix:** 22.0° – 24.3°
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 6.32 – 7.23 g/L
- **pH:** 3.25 – 3.40

Finished Wine Statistics

- **Alcohol:** 14.0%
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 6.45 g/L
- **pH:** 3.41
- **Sulfate Level:** low

Fermentation: French oak barrels

Barrel Regimen: 10 months in barrel, 21% new French oak

Bottling Date: August 17, 2022

TASTING NOTES

A fresh bouquet of apricot, lemon, lime and honey create a welcoming nose. On the palate, the wine is richly concentrated with flavors of golden apple, caramel and vanilla that lead to a finish that is round, supple and refreshing.

Peak Drinkability: 2022 – 2027

FOOD PAIRINGS

Enjoy with rich seafood dishes including shrimp alfredo, crab stuffed lobster tail, creamy potato dishes, fall soups including curry butternut squash and spiced pumpkin and medium cheese like white cheddar or havarti.

