



MARTINELLI

ESTABLISHED IN THE 1880'S

SYRAH

HOP BARN HILL VINEYARD • RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY

2020



94 points – Erin Brooks, Wine Advocate

92 points – Audrey Frick, Deb Dunnuck

WINEMAKING DETAILS

Fermentation: 100% neutral French Oak; 100% Malolactic; on the lees with daily battonage

Oak: 50% new French Oak, 50% neutral French Oak, 15 months total

Case Production: 35

VINEYARD DETAILS

Soil Type:

Huichicha

Rootstock:

420

WINEMAKER

Courtney Robinett Wagoner

CONSULTING WINEMAKER

Erin Green

GROWING YEAR

2020 will likely go down as one of the most memorable harvests in Martinelli history. The growing season was nearly perfect until mid-August when two nearby wildfires were ignited by a dry lightning storm. At this point in the berries' growth cycle, the skins are softening and developing favors. Because we religiously prioritize the quality of our wines and the integrity of our brand, we made the hard but crucial decision to not make any Pinot Noir from the 2020 vintage. Unlike the other varieties that we grow, Pinot Noir is susceptible to absorbing flavors from its surroundings because it is exceptionally thin-skinned. This is why we can pick up terroir flavor nuances even within the same AVA in this grape. Luckily, we have Chardonnay, Zinfandel, and Syrah from the 2020 vintage.

Chardonnay is removed from its skin as soon as it enters the winery, so contact with any smoke flavors is extremely minimal. Zinfandel and Syrah both have very tough skins and did not absorb the smoke flavors we tasted in the Pinots. Though we were only able to process half the amount of fruit we do in a normal year, we are grateful for the outstanding wines we were able to make from the 2020 harvest.

VINEYARD CHARACTER

The Hop Barn Hill Syrah Vineyard was planted in 1996 on a clay loam slope near the old hop barn neighboring our winemaking area and tasting room. These heavy clay soils are perfect to reduce the vigor common to Syrah vines, forcing the plants to focus their efforts on the fruit versus their canopy or root systems. The grapevines are planted in four separate blocks; one meter by two meters apart, on less than an acre of land which yields no more than 3 barrels each vintage.

TASTING NOTES

Fascinating aromas of dried cherries, saffras, and mace are found in the nose. Balanced tannins complement the palate with flavors of black plum and dark chocolate. Cardamom is present in the spicy long finish.