



MARTINELLI

ESTABLISHED IN THE 1880'S

## CHARDONNAY

CHARLES RANCH VINEYARD • FORT ROSS - SEAVIEW

2020



2020 Vintage

*95 points - Erin Brooks, Wine Advocate*

*95 points – Audrey Frick, Jeb Dunnuck*

2018 Vintage

*95 points - Antonio Galloni, Vinous*

*94+ points - Erin Brooks, Wine Advocate*

### WINEMAKING DETAILS

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

Oak: 50% new French Oak,  
50% neutral French Oak, 10 months

Case Production: 192

### VINEYARD DETAILS

Soil Type:  
Josephine and Goldridge,

Rootstock:  
AXR and St. George

Clones:  
Wente and 04

### 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. Therefore, we are able to 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 skins 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 Charles Ranch was once one of the largest sheep ranches in Sonoma County. George Charles was a fourth-generation rancher in the rugged hills and raised 2,000 head of sheep along with a small herd of bison. George's son-in-law, Lee Martinelli Sr., was a successful third-generation grape grower and consulted with George as to which grape variety would be the most suitable to plant in this unique climate. The distinct micro-climate is two miles inland from the Pacific Coastline at Fort Ross and is ideally suited for growing Burgundian varieties. In 1980 George sold his herd and used the steep 14-acre pasture to plant Chardonnay grapes, becoming a pioneer of grape growing in an area that is now considered a prime viticultural region. The vineyard was planted in 1981, being the second vineyard planted on the far Sonoma Coast.

### TASTING NOTES

Delightful aromas of Asian pear, golden apple, and honey are found in the nose. Mouthcoating from entry to finish this richness complements the flavors of preserved lemon and powdered sugar. Whispers of nutmeg are found in the lengthy finish.