



CHARDONNAY
CHARLES RANCH VINEYARD • FORT ROSS - SEAVIEW
2022



GROWING YEAR

The 2022 season started out with ideal conditions with early rains helping to push bud break into Spring. While we encountered instances of shatter (a grape berry fails to develop because of incomplete pollination) due to frost, this was limited to specific vineyards.

Meticulous attention was given to addressing this issue, as we diligently assessed each block and thinned any clusters affected by shatter. Thankfully, the summer months offered the optimal combination of warm days and perfectly cool nights. However, Labor Day weekend launched what has been marked as one of the most heat-intensive 7-day periods on record for Sonoma County, resulting in a significant number of vineyards reaching their ripening stage simultaneously.

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 varietals. 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

Rich and polished, the Charles Ranch Chardonnay offers aromas of poached pear, golden apple, and wildflower honey. The entry is supple and round, balanced by a clean acidity that frames flavors of candied lemon zest and gentle barrel spice. A hint of fresh cream lends weight and texture, carrying through to a long, refined finish.

2022 Vintage

93 points – Audrey Frick, *Jeb Dunnuck*

2021 Vintage

95 points - *Antonio Galloni, Vinous*

94 points – *Jeb Dunnuck/Aubrey Frick*

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: 102

VINEYARD DETAILS

Soil Type:
Josephine and Goldridge,

Rootstock:
AXR and St. George

Clones:
Wente and 04