



APPELLATION: SONOMA COAST
VARIETAL BLEND: 100% CHARDONNAY
WINEMAKER: MATTHEW RORICK & SPENCER GRAHAM
RELEASE DATE: SUMMER 2010

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Rich gold in color. Aromas of honeysuckle, pear and starfruit intermingle in the glass, with hints of ginger and vanilla adding to the complexity of the nose. Broad and voluptuous on the palate, this wine has a great natural acidity and a bold mouth feel. It is brimming with fresh, enticing flavors of pear, crème brûlée, orange marmalade and bright lemon curd. The long and lingering finish features nuances of wet slate and lemon meringue, keeping the palate bright and refreshed. This is a powerful, delicious full-flavored wine of great purity.

WINEMAKING

In each vintage, our most expressive blocks of Chardonnay grapes are identified and earmarked for special treatment. This vintage's mild growing season offered an opportunity for us to produce a Chardonnay that was laden with flavors and aromas and also with an intense, focus and structure so suitable for long aging. With this in mind, we harvested our special lots slightly later than usual, in order to allow the flavors to develop into a rich expression of the variety – yet with all of the vivacious and freshening natural acid found in the grapes. The grapes were harvested by hand and brought to the winery for whole-cluster pressing. We selected the most superior portions of juice and fermented those in carefully selected small French oak barrels. Assiduous stirring of the lees after fermentation was done in order to increase the roundness and weight of the wine on the palate. Bottled unfiltered and unfiltered in its most pure, natural state, the 2007 ExS Chardonnay Sonoma Coast is a bold and focused wine that is delicious in its youth and it will continue to develop richness, depth and character for many years to come.

VINEYARDS

Our Block Seven Chardonnay grapes are harvested from a small portion of our longstanding vineyard, north of San Pablo Bay on Lakeville Highway outside the town of Petaluma in southern Sonoma County. Cooling influences from the nearby bay converge with those from the Pacific Coast to create a particularly cool microclimate which allows for gradual and complete development of flavors and aromas.

VINTAGE

The 2007 growing season in northern California appeared to be trending toward a warm one, until the dog days of August mellowed into a mild, dry fall. This well-paced ripening climate allowed our grapes to develop gradually and evenly. By assiduous management of the crop level and vine growth, we were able to guide this vintage's Chardonnay grapes to optimum ripeness and thus showcase aromas and flavors of great complexity. The result is a wine which is a brilliantly true expression of the variety, featuring clean, pure delicious flavors, ample structure and body, and balancing natural acidity.

CELLARING RECOMMENDATIONS

For Chardonnay drinkers who place a premium on brightness and focus, our 2007 E x S Block Seven will continue to develop these characteristics over the next three to five years. Additionally, due to the dense structure at the core of this wine, it will continue to broaden and gain in richness and depth for another five to seven years beyond that, providing a worthy reward for the patient enthusiast of round, complex and well-aged examples of the variety.

Elizabeth Spencer

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