

ANCIENT PEAKS

2016 | CHARDONNAY

PASO ROBLES, CALIFORNIA | SANTA MARGARITA RANCH



CHARDONNAY

OVERVIEW

Our estate Margarita Vineyard is cradled along the coastal Santa Lucia Mountains just 14 miles from the Pacific Ocean. Here, amid one of the Paso Robles region's coolest growing environments, we are able to produce a varietally true Chardonnay with a singular sense of place. After producing limited-edition Chardonnays for several years, we were recently inspired to include Chardonnay in our core family of wines. The 2016 vintage marks our second release.

VINEYARD

The 2016 Chardonnay comes from blocks 20, 22 and 26 at Margarita Vineyard. Blocks 20 and 22 occupy a northeast-facing flank of the vineyard, where the morning and afternoon temperatures are particularly cool. Here, brisk marine air settles after flowing through a mountain notch known as Trout Creek. These conditions provide our Chardonnay fruit with the long period necessary to nurture vivid varietal character. Block 26 faces southeast, where added sun exposure produces Chardonnay fruit with a riper, more tropical profile. Margarita Vineyard stands alone as the southernmost vineyard in the Paso Robles region, and as the only vineyard in the new Santa Margarita Ranch AVA. The surrounding mountain peaks act as a gateway for cool marine air, resulting in an extended growing season that yields fruit with uncommon depth and structure. The peaks are also testaments to the tectonic forces that created Margarita Vineyard's rare diversity of soils, ultimately fostering natural complexity in our wines.

WINEMAKING

The winemaking vision of the 2016 Chardonnay is to produce a wine that strikes a fine balance between the leaner and richer styles of the varietal, in order to offer a versatile, food-friendly Chardonnay. After harvesting and light pressing, the juice was cold-fermented in stainless steel tanks for the preservation of delicate aromatics and acidity. After fermentation, the wine was racked for aging in stainless steel (80%) and French oak barrels (20%). The oak-aged lot underwent secondary malolactic fermentation and ultimately lent a fitting touch of roundness and creaminess to the wine's otherwise crisp texture. A dash of Viognier from Margarita Vineyard was incorporated in the final blend to uplift the aromatic profile.

TASTING NOTES

The 2016 Chardonnay presents bright tropical fruit aromas with accents of butterscotch, vanilla and spice. Rounded flavors of pear, melon, pineapple and papaya unfurl along a sumptuous texture. Quenching notes of green apple and citrus add crispness to a long, smooth finish.

CUISINE PAIRING

The 2016 Chardonnay is made to be versatile with food. Recommended pairings include butter-poached scallops, creamy risotto, shrimp pasta in white wine sauce and grilled chicken breast.

VINEYARD:

Margarita Vineyard

VARIETAL COMPOSITION:

Chardonnay 98%
Viognier 2%

SOIL TYPE:

Grantic

HARVEST DATES:

September 29
September 26
October 6

AGING REGIMEN:

8 months in stainless steel (80%)
and French oak (20%)

FINAL ANALYSIS:

Alcohol: 13.2%
TA: .662
pH: 3.89

CASES PRODUCED:

1,956

SRP:

\$19

