

Aotearoa Chardonnay Symposium 2024

Day 1

Session 4

Wine 3

Winery	DuMOL
Viticulturist	Andy Smith (proprietor)
Winemaker	Andy Smith & Jenna Davis
Wine	Charles Heintz Vineyard 'Isobel' Chardonnay 2021
Region	Sonoma Coast, California
Sub region(s)	Green Valley (of the Russian River Valley)
Wine RRP \$	\$75 USD
Cases produced	1050



Wine Analysis

pH	3.37
TA	6.64g/L
VA	0.47g/L
DCO2	1,345mg/L
Alcohol %	13.50%
RS	0.8 g/L

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Tasting Note

Classic Heintz aromas that are simultaneously exotic and focused: ginger and honey; lemongrass and sweet mint; chamomile and sea spray. Intense lemon and lime oil dominate the flavors with green apple and taut minerals. The texture is deep and layered with tremendous volume and fruit extract. The wine's vibrant acidity lifts this richness adding tension and freshness. Long echo of savory botanical intensity and lingering flinty edge. Serve no cooler than 55°F and drink between mid-2023 and 2030.

Vineyard/Vintage Notes

This is our twentieth vintage bottling Heintz Chardonnay and one of the elite vintages for quality and character. We've crafted so many memorable wines from these magical vines since I first set foot in the vineyard way back in 1998. The wines are incredibly distinctive, unlike anything else in Sonoma or California as a whole, and that's down to the special vineyard site itself. High elevation, close to the ocean, long lingering fog influence, late-season ripening, and precise farming combine to give the fruit striking intensity and style. Our 2021 ranks alongside 2002, 2007, 2013 and 2019 as my favorite expressions.

Winemaking Notes

Heintz Vineyard is one of most prized Chardonnay vineyards in California with a truly distinct "vineyard signature". The fruit is very expensive & highly coveted. There are a range of styles made by the various buyers from sparkling to a ripe opulent style. DuMOL is the only producer to source from the two soil types - the western sandy block ripens 5 days prior to the east block on clay/loam. We've had the same rows since 2001. It's a very foggy site that overlooks Green Valley - the fog moves through the vineyard & cascades into the valley below. Humidity is high so farming is conventional/sustainable. No herbicide is used (beginning 2022). Powdery Mildew is less of an issue, but many vintages feature a "lick of botrytis" - not 2021 though which was a drought year. Often the harvest can be quite late due to its coastal proximity (8 miles) & big vines that build sugar slowly - late-October is quite normal. The beauty of the vineyard is that acid levels are maintained even in late vintages. 2021 was early due to moderate crop level & drought season. The vines/clusters are an intermix of small Old Wente selection & larger UCD-108 & UCD4 - the workhorse clones of California - in the early 1980s you planted what vine material you could find. The vines have good vigor and require one or two hedging passes per season. Leaves are systematically removed immediately post set to allow spray penetration. Only the exterior south facing side is left shaded, the interiors & morning side are 100% cluster exposure due to botrytis threat. Sunburn is never an issue in this very cool/windy site. With fruit as good as this, the winemaking can be very simple, elegant & clean - the fruit contains everything we need. Pressing is slow to maximise extract from the skins. The Willmes press with its central drain channels is perfect for this & no press cuts are necessary. The juice is settled for 24 hours without SO2 then moved to barrel. All juice solids that will flow are shared between the barrels unless botrytis has been an issue. 25ppm SO2 is added after barreling & fermentation starts after 7 days, lasting for 2-3 weeks. MLF is inoculated or it doesn't start. The wine is sulfited (60ppm) one month after MLF is complete, in typically March. No lees stirring is performed to maintain the wine's focus. The wine & full lees are moved by inert gas to tank after 11 months to complete a fairly reductive élevage. During this time the lees settle by gravity & "fine" the wine, polishing it & rounding out any sharp edges. The wine continues to feed off the lees in a low-SO2 & oxygen-free environment. After 5/6 months, we slowly pump rack off the sediment then the bottom 20% of the tank is 2-micron filtered before unfiltered bottling. The 2021 was bottled at 3.5-ntu clarity. The wine is sealed with Diam 10 Origine cork. The wine is sold to our private clients & US restaurants.

Accolades/Reviews

97 JAMES SUCKLING
 98+ THE WINE ADVOCATE
 96 ANTONIO GALLONI - VINOUS
 98 THE WINE INDEPENDENT
 96 JEB DUNNUCK

#	
Block/Parcel Name	Charles Heintz Vineyard

Vineyard, Block or Sub-Block

% of Blend	100% (75% east block on sandy/clay/loam & 25% west block on sandy loam)
Clone	Intermixed Old Wente, UCD 108 & UCD 4
Rootstock	AXR-1. Phylloxera has no impact in these sandy soils
Soil Type	Goldridge Sandy Loam (over Clay in parts)
Vine Age	39 years old (planted 1982)
Years in Production	First crop 1985
Other...	Elevation of 244m (800ft). Ridge top with gentle sloping sides, with full exposure. East-West orientation. 8 miles to Pacific Ocean.

Yield Management

Target T/ha	No target but typically 10-12T/Ha
Actual T/ha	9T/Ha
Vines/ha	1800 vines/Ha (726 vines/acre)
Kg/vine	
Irrigated?	Minimally: 2-3 times per season after seed hardening ~10L per application
Type e.g. above ground / subsurface	Above ground
Other...	

Vine Management

Pruning method	Spur/cordon trained lyre system fashionable in early 1980s, big tall vines. High yield per vine, wide spacing
Pruning (buds/m)	
Canopy density (shoots/m)	
Shoot thinning	To normal local standards, one shoot per bud, no crowding, etc
Crop thinning (% removed)	At 90% veraison to alleviate crowding, weak shoots, etc
Kg/m fruit	
Leaf plucking	Full exposure interiors & morning side
Timing of leaf plucking	Immediately post set for spray penetration
Timing of crop thinning	At 90% veraison then ongoing to remove botrytis if needed right up to day of harvest
Fruit exposure achieved %	100% north-facing sides, 0% south-facing sides
Date of flowering	Mid-June
Date of fruit set	Toward end of June
Days between flowering and harvest	100+/- days. Wide picking window due to cool temps in late Sept & October
Other...	Clusters average 120g to 180g depending on clone. Vineyard averages 1200mm rainfall per season in winter/spring. 2021 was 600mm. No rain between May & November but high humidity due to fog. At 7am it will be 95% RH which falls to 40% RH at 3pm then fog rolls back in at night.

Harvest

Date	4 picks between 19-26 Sep 2021. 70% of the fruit harvested was selected for this bottling.	
Brix	21.8-22.4 Bx	
pH	3.22 average	
TA	7.6 g/L average	
Malic Acid	2.2 g/L average	K=1,200mg/L
YAN	240 mg/L average	
Method of Harvest	By hand at night into 0.5T bins then trucked 20km. In press by 8am.	
Fruit condition	Very clean with firm skins	
Field Additions	None	
Other...		

Pressing

Yes/No and details. Reasons why?

Additions to fruit (pre-pressing)	None
Destemmed	No
Whole Bunch	Yes
Crushed	No
Press Type	Willmes Sigma 10
Wash	
Press fractions	None
Press rate L/tonne	590L per US ton (650L per metric T)
Hard pressings, kept /downgraded	Zero press cut, max 1,600mbar
Juice additions, types and rates	25ppm SO2 to juice in barrel ~30 hours after pressing, to delay MLF
Gas cover, inert	None
Hyper Ox, timing	None
Settling. Time, temperature	24 hours at natural harvest temp ~13C, no SO2. No chilling to prevent loss of natural juice nutrients
Direct to barrel	No
Juice NTU (if known).	450 average
Other...	5 hour press cycle, minimal tumbling, champagne-inspired approach. 1,600mbar max.

Fermentation

Yes/No and details. Reasons why?

Vessel Type(s)	80% x 320L, 32mm thick stave "cigare" barrels & 20% x 500L, 42mm thick stave puncheons
New oak, % and type	30% New French Oak from Atelier Centre France. Medium toast/steam-bent. Balance 1x-used, 2x-used, 3x-used 320L & neutral puncheons
Temp Control. Target temp or rate	No temp control during fermentation, the cellar is cooled to 18C. The fermentation peaked at 25C.
Wild ferment, % of blend	100%
Inoculated. Yeast used and rate	None
Nutrient Additions. Type, rate, timing	None - YAN levels tend to be healthy in these soils & in 2021 there was no stress. 20g/HL FermControl Bio is an option
Oxygen Additions. Timing, rate	None
Enrichment. Target Alc %, timing	None
Acidification. Target pH/TA, timing	None
MLF. Inoculated / natural, timing	100%, inoculated in barrel, Omega strain, November 1st
Warming for MLF	None, we chill our cellar to 10C between November-April using our night air fan system
% MLF in blend	100%
Other...	

Post Ferment / Finishing	Yes/No and details. Reasons why?
Stirring, frequency	Zero unless MLF is faltering
Enzyme addition	None
Other lees management	Stir lees the morning of racking to tank after 11 months
Time in barrel	11 months
Time in tank prior to finishing	5 months in a single tall 9,500L SS tank, completely topped, with full lees >1,000ntu, & low FSO2 ~15ppm
Palate fining, type and rate	None, the lees do this naturally as they settle through the wine
Protein fining, to what level	Not required - the wine is stable naturally
Cold Stabilisation, to what level	None
Filtration, type	Bottom 20% of settled tank was modular/lenticular filtered at 2-micron for clarity. Bottled at 3.5 NTU
FSO2 level at bottling	35 ppm
TSO2 level at bottling	71 ppm
Bottling date	January 16th, 2023
Filtration type at bottling	None
Release date	March, 2023
Other...	