

# ANCIENT PEAKS

2020 | CHARDONNAY

PASO ROBLES, CALIFORNIA | SANTA MARGARITA RANCH



## 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, conditions are optimal for producing a varietally true Chardonnay with a singular sense of place. We perform multiple picks during harvest to create a wine that strikes a fine balance between the leaner and richer styles of the varietal, all with the intent to create a versatile, food-friendly Chardonnay

## MARGARITA VINEYARD

The 2020 Chardonnay comes from blocks 22 and 37 at Margarita Vineyard. Block 37 occupies 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 22 unfolds along rocky alluvium soils and provides a fruit-forward core to the final blend. 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 2020 growing season was marked by a mild spring and summer, punctuated by two late-summer heat waves that accelerated the pace of ripening into harvest. We harvested our Chardonnay fruit in four stages, starting with a September 16 pick to establish a bright fruit core and finishing with a pick on October 7 to layer in more tropical tones. After harvesting and light pressing, 66-percent of the juice was cold-fermented in stainless steel tanks for the preservation of delicate aromatics and bright fruit flavors. The remainder was barrel-fermented and aged in 40-percent new oak to add roundness, texture and complexity. This oak-aged lot also underwent secondary malolactic fermentation, which ultimately lent a touch of creaminess to the wine.

## TASTING NOTES

The 2020 Chardonnay offers floral, tropical aromas of papaya and banana with hints of pear. A round, luscious texture fills the mouth with flavors of pineapple and honeydew melon, with trailing notes of fresh citrus and minerality. Sweet notes of vanilla spice linger on a soft, elegant finish.

## CUISINE PAIRING

The smooth, rounded character of the 2020 Chardonnay is made to be versatile with food. Suggested pairings include steamed lobster, oven-baked salmon, chicken with lemon butter, and grilled snapper with tropical fruit salsa.

## VINEYARD:

Margarita Vineyard

## VARIETAL COMPOSITION:

Chardonnay 96%  
Viognier 4%

## SOIL TYPE:

Granitic

## HARVEST DATES:

September 16 (Block 37)  
September 22 (Block 22)  
September 30 (Block 37)  
October 7 (Block 37)

## AGING REGIMEN:

6 months in stainless steel (66%)  
and French oak (34%)

## FINAL ANALYSIS:

Alcohol: 13.5%  
pH: 3.77  
TA: .57

## CASES PRODUCED:

3,649

## SRP:

\$19



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CHARDONNAY