

ROCO WINERY

2016 GRAVEL ROAD CHARDONNAY

ABOUT GRAVEL ROAD CHARDONNAY

This 2016 Chardonnay is a blend of the three best Chardonnay vineyards in the Willamette Valley: Wits' End, Knudsen, and Marsh Estate Vineyards. Located in the Chehalem Mountains AVA, Wits' End is the Soles' estate vineyard. Four acres of Chardonnay were planted here in 2013. As a result of Rollin's 30+ years in the industry, ROCO has access to premium fruit from Marsh Estate and Knudsen Vineyards. Rollin crafts wines that balance minerality and rich power.

2016 VINTAGE NOTES

The 2016 growing season was a cross between the 2014 and 2015 vintages. It started with a warm, sunny spring and early summer, leading to earlier than "normal" vine development in the vineyards. Heat spikes in May and the first part of June brought an early bloom to the Willamette Valley. The rest of the summer, however, was pretty standard with mostly dry, warm days. We gladly welcomed nine cool, damp days at the end of August, which helped mitigate a bit of dryness in the vines. That last bit of rain helped preserve acidity and complexity in the wines.

We started to pick earlier than expected on September 9, but once we started, it was a pretty mellow harvest, which allowed us to do everything in an orderly and best practices sort of way. Our 2016 wines are flavor packed with great, rich fruit expression. From whites to reds, this vintage is a real "crowd pleaser."

WINEMAKING PROCESS

ROCO Chardonnay is handpicked and then chilled overnight to 38° F in a large cold room. The chilled, whole cluster bunches are pressed, and the juice is sent to tank. After settling in the tank, the juice is racked to French oak barrels where it completes fermentation. After the primary fermentation, the young wine goes through malolactic fermentation to soften acidity and add further complexity. The finished wine ages on its' original yeast lees until bottling in July.

WINEMAKER'S TASTING NOTES

"This wine has the characteristic youthful green-yellow straw color found in ROCO Chardonnays. Aromas of citrus blossom, pear fruit, brown turkey fig, and lovely spice leap out of the glass to greet you. This wine was built for aging with a bold mineral core wrapped by rich comice pear, a hint of citrus starfruit, and cashew nut, leading to a promise of white peach with a touch of Tahitian lime in the middle palate. The finish is opulent without going heavy. This is a seamless, cool climate Chardonnay."

- Rollin Soles, Winemaker



JAMES SUCKLING.COM 
93 points

International
WINE REPORT
91 points

WINE ENTHUSIAST
90 points

VARIETAL: 100% Willamette Valley Chardonnay

APPELLATION: Willamette Valley AVA

VINEYARDS: Wits' End, Marsh Estate and Knudsen Vineyards

SOILS: Sedimentary & Basalt soils

CLONE: INTAV 95 & 76

OAK: 20% New French

ALCOHOL: 14%

PRODUCTION: 741 cases

RETAIL: \$35