

ROCO WINERY

2016 WITS' END CHARDONNAY



ABOUT THE WITS' END VINEYARD

Purchased in 1987, the Wits' End vineyard drapes down the southwestern slope of the Chehalem Mountain Range at 400' elevation. Situated among stands of native trees and two natural springs, the property is a quintessential Willamette Valley landscape, teeming with wildlife—including owls and hawks, coyotes and even cougars.

Having anticipated this site as a perfect spot for vines, the Soles' began planting their vineyard in 2001 to Pinot Noir. Then, in 2013, they expanded it to a total of 20 planted acres, adding a block of Chardonnay in the process. Today, the property stands as testament to nearly 30 years of Willamette Valley vineyard know-how.

The clonal selection is outstanding and cutting edge. The vineyard is densely planted on blonde marine sedimentary soil, derived from old ocean floor sandstone and shale, and farmed for low yields. The fresh water springs on the property flow year-round, providing irrigation capability from an old water right. The Pinot noir and Chardonnay from this vineyard are truly unique and expressive, producing wines that will age.

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

“Aromas of caramel, cashew nut, and pear concentrate, with a hint of coconut flake. The palate has a laser focused white stone minerality wrapped by snappy Asian pear fruit. The finish rides on and on with honeysuckle and steamed bun perfume. Not your typical American chardonnay!”

-Rollin Soles, Winemaker

Robert Parker
WINE ADVOCATE
92 points

VARIETAL: 100% Chardonnay
APPELLATION: Chehalem Mountains AVA
VINEYARDS: Wits' End Vineyard
SOILS: Sedimentary soils
CLONE: ENTAV 95
OAK: 100% neutral French Oak
ALCOHOL: 13.5%
PRODUCTION: 24 cases
RETAIL: \$60

