

ROCO WINERY

2015 GRAVEL ROAD CHARDONNAY

ABOUT GRAVEL ROAD CHARDONNAY

This 2015 Chardonnay is a blend of our three favorite Chardonnay vineyards in the Willamette Valley: Gran Moraine, Wits' End, Marsh Estate, and Knudsen Vineyards. The first three vineyards grow in low to mid elevation, in sandstone-shale derived soils that provide a lovely creamy texture. Knudsen Vineyards is located at a high elevation in volcanic derived soil that adds a racy minerality to this unique Chardonnay.

WINEMAKER'S VINTAGE NOTES

This growing season was one of those warm, sunny experiences that we all desire in the often challenging Willamette Valley. Other than a spot of high temperatures, nearly the entirety of August punched in the 80's with clear blue skies and virtually no precipitation occurred all summer long. The vines were obviously struggling under persistent sunshine and no precipitation, but then August 28-30th brought us a refreshing 1.3 inches of rain! This rainfall perked up the vines, the acid bounced back and fruit flavors became livened once again. We received one more shot of cool rain on September 17th with freezing levels down to 5500 feet. These cloudy cool wet events at the end of the growing season helped to lift the character, and provide a nice zip of flavor. We were able to pick at optimum ripeness beginning around September 4th through September 23rd. The 2015 wines are chock full of great fruit flavor, structure and a mouthwatering dose of delicious freshness and acidity.

WINEMAKING PROCESS

ROCO Chardonnay is handpicked and then chilled overnight at 38° F in a large storage room. The chilled bunches are then pressed and the juice is sent to a tank. After settling in tank, the juice is inoculated and racked to neutral oak where is completes fermentation. After primary fermentation is complete, the young wine goes through malolactic fermentation in order to soften the acidity and to add further complexity. Next, the wines are racked to different barrels approximately 15-20% new and 80% neutral French oak. There they rest for at least five months before bottling.

WINEMAKER'S TASTING NOTES

This might be the most opulent, yet balanced, Chardonnay of my career since the 1992 vintage. The 1992 Chardonnay was a wine that has stood the test of age-worthiness, and this 2015 will as well. The aromas are a blend of warmer-riper fruit and traditional cold climate Willamette Chardonnay. Look for Asian pear and yellow skinned apple center with lovely citrus zest and white flower scents finishing with roasted hazelnut. This is a very rich, concentrated Chardonnay on the palate and putting a dozen or so bottles of this wine into your cellar will repay you with years of delight.

- Rollin Soles, Winemaker

VARIETAL: 100% Oregon Chardonnay

APPELLATIONS: Yamhill-Carlton, Chehalem Mountains, Dundee Hills

VINEYARDS: Gran Moraine, Wits' End, Marsh Estate & Knudsen

CLONES: INTAV 95

OAK: 8% New French, 10 Months

ALCOHOL: 14%

PRODUCTION: 700 cases

SOILS: 90% Sedimentary, 10% Volcanic derived soils

RETAIL: \$40.00

