



2023 Drake Estate Vineyard Chardonnay

WINEMAKER COMMENTS

Spiced notes of Meyer lemon peel along with scents of yellow apple and pear typify this wine. Hints of shiso and tarragon show the cool climate of the Drake Vineyard. Located in the far west region of the Russian River Valley, the ripening of this Chardonnay is slow and methodical, allowing for complexity to be achieved. The entry is weighty, and the wine has incredible saltiness, with a saline character that transitions to minerals on the finish. Green pear flavors accompany hints of tangerine along with a spicy Meyer lemon peel sensation.

THE VINEYARD

The Drake Estate Vineyard is located right on the Russian River near Guerneville and has the same Yolo Sandy Silt Loam soil as found in many of the very best vineyards along Westside Road. Originally planted to Rome apples, a late-ripening variety, the property has proven itself an exceptional location for growing Pinot Noir and Chardonnay.

HARVEST 2023

We experienced a welcome sense of normality in 2023, after tumultuous weather patterns during previous growing seasons, including drought conditions, heat events, and hail. This vintage began auspiciously with historical average rainfall and modest temperatures at the start of bud break. Ample sunshine and early heat resulted in even growth of the canopies, creating uniformity and balance as the vines entered the flowering cycle. While it was similarly cool at the outset of 2011, the 2023 heat units built slowly, and the weather was ideal by May. The flowering period was quick, and the fruit set bountiful. The weather was perfect in June and July, with a few heat spikes that kept the plants healthy and sustained. Mid-season crop adjustments were necessary to ensure good vine balance as veraison approached. With the cooler start to the vintage and the normal fog pattern of August, the ripening cycle slowed, and the crop achieved ideal hang time for tannin development at modest sugars. Across the board, the wines exhibit terrific purity of character with excellent tannin resolution. While hot and dry years can create wines of shocking intensity, these cooler vintages showcase the elegant style of Williams Selyem.

TECHNICAL NOTES

Barrel Description: 34% new, 19% 1yr., 26% 2 yr., 21% 3+ yr.

Barrel Aged: 13 months

pH: 3.51

TA: 0.62g/100mL

Alc: 13.5%

Released 2025

