

Littorai

2020 Sonoma Coast Chardonnay

History and Philosophy

Littorai Wines is a small, family-owned and operated winery producing vineyard designated Chardonnay and Pinot Noir from the true north coast of California: the coastal mountains of Sonoma and Mendocino Counties. Proprietors Heidi and Ted Lemon are lifelong Winemakers. Ted Lemon began his career at the age of 22 by working for four years in the heart of Burgundy and in 1982, was the first American hired to manage a property in Burgundy at Domaine Guy Roulot in Meursault. Where some see technology as the route to great wines, we see farming. We derive our sustainable farming techniques from the fertile cross currents of permaculture, agro-ecology and biodynamics. Our winery is situated on a 30 acre integrated biodynamic farm where we produce as many of the vineyard and farm needs on site as possible. Our Estate produced compost is our “fertilizer” of choice.

Expressed in acreage terms, beginning in 2017:

- 100% of Littorai’s vineyard sources is farmed using only organically certified materials
- 85% is farmed using biodynamic methods (all sites we own or lease and most others)
- 49% is estate production

The goal of winegrowing is to produce the finest wine, and that such wine should be a product of the vineyard, not the cellar.

Vintage & Vinification Information

The yields are very low of Chardonnay in 2020. This was unrelated to set at flowering but rather to our efforts to ensure that there would be zero chance the wines would be affected by the wildfires. We shortened our press cycles, pressed whole cluster, and made earlier (lower pressure) press cuts sending more wine to the Sonoma Coast Chardonnay bottling than usual. In the end, that was not necessary as all the Chardonnays, including the Sonoma Coast, are exceptional with complex bouquets and lovely intensity. Malic acid numbers were somewhat lower in 2020 compared to 2019 and the tartaric acid numbers were higher. You might want to think of tartaric acid as being the backbone, the structure of the wine. At bottling, the pH and alcohols of 2020 and 2019 were within shouting distance of each other. There was no botrytis presence in 2020. They possess a grace in the mid-palate and yet are not fat or rich, thus “silky” is the word that has come to my mind all during their aging process in barrel.

Tasting Notes

This wine is blended from the last press fractions of Thieriot, Mays Canyon, Charles Heintz and The Tributary. In 2020, out of an abundance of caution, we made those press cuts earlier and sent more wine to the Sonoma Coast blend, as indicated above. While still presenting the richer, more opulent style compared to the vineyard designates, this version is tighter than many of its predecessors, the result is lovely. Melon, white pear, green apple, earth, slightly nutty with a hint of truffles. Persistent and delicate, like white lace.

APPELLATION
Sonoma Coast

FARMING
Farmed using certified organic materials and biodynamic methods

BARREL AGEING
11 months French Oak,
25% new; 5 months stainless steel before bottling

PRODUCTION
347 cases

ALCOHOL
12.9% abv

