



2020 Thieriot Vineyard 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.

Vineyard

West of the town of Occidental, on the south shoulder of a 1200’ ridge. This is the cooler side of the hills around Occidental yet the vineyard is protected from the northwest winds and fog by a ridge to the north. It overlooks the fog filled gap in the Sonoma hills, which leads to Petaluma. Littorai Wines has a long term lease on this site and it is farmed using organic and biodynamic methods, but is not certified.

2020 Vintage 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

Notes of fennel and fern, wet stones, pastry dough, honeydew melon, Golden Delicious apple. Great acidity in a very dry style with a very long, slightly phenolic finish. There is a savory and salty quality to this wine that is very intriguing. The acidity hits like a bolt of lightning.

APPELLATION
Sonoma Coast

SOILS
Gold Ridge Loam over Sandstone

FARMING
Farmed using only organic materials and biodynamic methods, but not certified

VINE AGE
Vineyard planted in 1996

ACREAGE
3.5 total acres, of which Littorai farms 2 acres

CLONES
Dijon 95, Hyde and Dutton Selections

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

YIELDS
2.0 tons/acre in 2020

PRODUCTION
167 cases

ALCOHOL
13.2% abv

