

Margins ‘Santa Clara Valley Counoise’ 2021

Producer - Megan Bell

Provenance: Santa Clara Valley, California

Farming: Organic

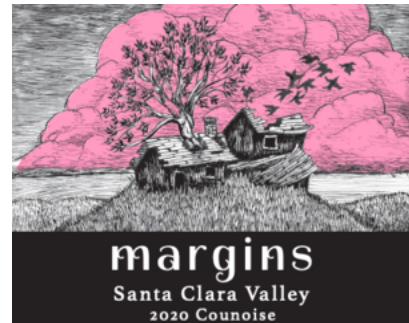
Grape(s): 100% Counoise

Vineyard: Sattler Vineyard, 2.7 acres planted in 2009 in a very cold area where grapes struggle to ripen. Alluvial soils with loam and sand.

Vintage: “I don’t know if I’ll have a vintage that good in my career again,” Megan says of the spectacular 2021 wines. A cold summer meant a month longer hang time for better flavor development and grape chemistry for easy fermentations and great quality.

Fermentation/ Aging: destemmed and fermented in macro bins with one punch down per day. Pressed after 10 days as the ferment goes dry into neutral barrel for 3 months aging on gross lees.

Sulfite: 20 ppm a week before bottling



The Producer:

“Complicated things don’t really interest me,” muses winemaker Megan Bell, “I want wine to be thought of as something that’s very not complicated - that’s something that affected me a lot at the beginning.” Megan’s interest in wine evolved from high-school brewing experiments into studies at UC Davis. From the beginning, she’s found the pall of mystery that hangs over wine to be discouraging and totally unnecessary. Her project, initially funded through a crowdsourcing campaign, is dedicated to the less evangelized regions of California and their scrappy mom ‘n pop vineyards. The wines are delicious, totally unfussy and super clean.

The Vineyard:

Sattler Vineyard is a 2.7 acre backyard vineyard nestled between the foothills of the Santa Clara Valley with 0.7 acres of Counoise. “Almost all of the vineyards I work with are mom and pop” she says. Planted in 2009, the grapes here struggle to ripen because of intense diurnal shift thanks to the nearby ocean. At a lean 19 brix, the Sattler Counoise is Megan’s last pick of the harvest in October. Flat and typified by alluvial soils with loam and sand, the site is relatively easy to care for.

Megan has been on quite a journey with the owners over the years. After extensive efforts to persuade them to farm organically they hit a road block and

decided to part ways. 6 months later, the owner's tasted her wines and were inspired. Today, Ed Sattler is a stay-at-home dad that has taken up the organic farming banner and manages the vineyard himself. As of the 2021 growing season, farming practices are organic and Megan purchases the whole vineyard.

Despite not being especially interested in Counoise, the growers really lobbied for Megan to take it for a whirl in 2019. “It’s so good I’m gonna buy the entire vineyard of Counoise next year” she told us right after and in 2021 she produced 223 cases.

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The Winery:

Megan doesn't like green character in wine and given a natural leaning towards a brambly character in most of the fruit she works with, she does not ferment anything whole cluster. The reds are essentially made the same way with alterations made when logistics demand: destemmed fruit is fermented in polyethylene macro bin. During fermentation she uses a metal tool for gentle, daily punchdowns. “I’m literally punching each section of the cap once,” she says “not mixing it up, not trying to introduce air. Very very gentle maceration, to get as little extraction as possible.” Macerations typically last the duration of the ferment (around two weeks) and base wines are pressed into neutral barrels for 3 months lees aging. Base wines are racked into tank with an addition of 20 ppm sulfite and bottled a week after without finning or filtration.

For more details email info@OlmsteadWine.com

