

Lo-Fi 'Chardonnay' 2018

Producer: Mike Roth and Craig Winchester

Provenance: Santa Barbara, California

Grape(s): 100% Chardonnay

Vineyard:

80% Oak Savannah Vineyard in Los Olivos - organic but not certified

20% Spear Vineyard in Santa Rita - certified organic

Vineyard: Vintage: Mike points out that Santa Barbara has a remarkably even growing season from year to year.

Fermentation/ Aging: whole cluster pressed into tank, settled for 48 hours and racked to a mix of concrete and neutral barrel for aging without battonage.

Sulfite: 35 ppm total, added at racking and bottling.

Filtration: none.



The Producer:

A big 'ol grey post-brutalist rectangle may not seem like the incubator for Lo-Fi's delightfully thirst quenching beauties but California is a strange place after all. Like many in the emerging scene of fresh-focused Cali wineries, Mike Roth and Craig Winchester favor a scientifically thorough approach without falling for the trickery of interventionist winemaking. Native yeast, natural malolactic conversion, minimal effective sulfur and bottling without filtration are the pillars of the Lo-Fi ethos. They embrace a Loire tinted view of California sun with an emphasis on whole-cluster ferments as they strive for clean, flirty wines that amp you up!

The Sourcing

80% of the Chardonnay is sourced from Oak Savannah Vineyard in Los Olivos farmed by Mike's friend Felipe Hernandez. The vineyard is established in an old-fashioned style called 'California Sprawl' where a T-shaped configuration with a catch wire so the vines aren't trained so much as tumbling over the sides. The method results in a thicker canopy which helps preserve acidity without sacrificing ripeness and helps to counteract Chardonnay's propensity for sunburn.

The remaining 20% is sourced from Spear Vineyard in the Santa Rita Hills AVA. The 34 acre vineyard was planted in 2014 at one of the highest altitudes in the AVA topping out around 900 feet with 10 acres dedicated to Chardonnay.

The Cellar

Whole clusters are pressed at 1 bar of pressure into tank for 48 hours of settling before racking away from gross lees into a mix of primarily Nomblot 6 hectoliter, amphora-shaped 'Dolia' tanks and some into neutral French oak barrels. Aged without bottonage and racked for the second time in February at which point the first addition of sulfite is made. A second addition of sulfite will be made if the wine has a higher pH.

The concrete tanks are from a winery Mike used to work for that received a batch of cracked tanks. Using an epoxying method designed for sealing concrete water tanks, Mike was able to make the tanks water tight again. He's been interested in working with concrete for a long time but the cost was prohibitive until this unexpected situation presented itself.

For more details email info@OlmsteadWine.com

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