



**Vineyard: (Les Collines d'or: The Golden Hills or The Hills of Gold)**

Our 2018 Version Les Collines d'or comes entirely from Black Knight Vineyard on the Sonoma Coast. This 100-acre property offers the perfect marriage of soils, exposure, elevation, Clones and vine maturity. Grapegrowing from this unique site dates back to the 1880's and the mature vines are planted in a complex mix of rocky soils with different microclimates and exposures. This mostly hillside vineyard is broken in to 6 distinctive vineyard blocks all above 800 feet in elevation. The deep, alluvial, cobbled-clay soils are a signature of the Petaluma Gap and the Sonoma benchlands made unique with rare deposits of quartzite and volcanic ash left behind from eruptions of Mt. St. Helena. These combinations of complex soils, mature vines, Clone and the cooling effects of the Petaluma Gap winds and coastal fog provide the perfect growing conditions for Burgundian style Chardonnay. We chose a field blend selection of the different Chardonnay blocks and classic Chardonnay Clones, 17 known as the Robert Young Clone, Clone 4 and Old Wente for this elegant yet structured wine.

**Winemaking:** The Chardonnay Blocks were picked in the early morning hours, late-September and arrived in pristine condition at the winery. The golden fruit was whole cluster pressed and settled in a stainless steel tank. We then transferred the juice to French oak barrels, 35% new for primary fermentation with native yeasts. We used batonage or stirring of the barrels everyday during primary and malolactic fermentation, which took place over a 60-day period. The wine then aged on its lees, sur lie, for an additional 9 months with additional batonage every month for additional mouthfeel and texture before being racked and bottled unfiltered.

**The Wine:** Opens with scents of citrus blossom, ripe golden apple, warm pineapple, stone fruit and lemon curd with hints of chalk dust, vanilla, toast and almond. Ripe, medium-bodied, the palate delivers mouth-filling orchard, honeyed citrus and tropical fruit with touches of bakers yeast and crushed stone. Displays a balanced combination of opulence and elegance, silky texture with a racy acid backbone, creating structure and finesse through the mineral finish.

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