

VINTAGE 2019



PULIDO-WALKER

Chardonnay

MT. VEEDER ESTATE VINEYARD

We thought we had it easy with the 2018 growing season, but 2019 was even more idyllic across the Napa Valley. This was one for the books: a long, warm summer with no prolonged heat spikes. Yields were not as copious as the previous year, but fruit quality was outstanding. Our focus with the Pulido~Walker Mt. Veeder Estate Chardonnay is not to produce substantial quantity, in any case, but rather to highlight the robust quality of this truly unique mountain Chardonnay. We could not have been more thrilled with the inaugural release of our 2018 vintage. With one more year of vine maturity, the sophomore effort is besting our debut and promises that future vintages of this bold Chardonnay will continue to expand our understanding of how this site can dazzle.

We harvested the three vineyard blocks separately on September 10. Once again, the Wenté clone produced a tiny amount of fruit, in contrast to a fairly ample amount of the Montrachet. Planted a year later than the other two, with cuttings from the Thieriot Vineyard, the first crop of the Robert Young clone made a fine, albeit small, showing this year.

Winemaking & Tasting Notes

With Chardonnay grapes, we carefully track the pH and brix to achieve a cooler-climate, Burgundian flavor profile in the wine, preferring a more citrusy style. We harvested at brix in the low 20s, and each block went direct to press and to barrel the same day. Each of the 17 resulting barrels was essentially its own lot, or sub-lot, with distinct characteristics that made the blending process exceptionally intricate as we considered each of the barrels individually.

The Wenté block wines were an immediate standout, with all making the cut, along with four barrels of the Montrachet and, initially, one barrel of the Robert Young. When we revisited the blend, the Robert Young was so good we included a second barrel.

The 2019 Pulido~Walker Mt. Veeder Estate Chardonnay shows a good bit of minerality, with the lime-blossom edge and oyster shell notes we associate with cooler-climate Chardonnays. We gravitated to the wines aged in new Louis Latour barrels, which contribute some brioche. This is clearly mountain-grown Chardonnay—almost a category unto itself. Broad shouldered and muscular, even with no skin contact, the 2019 Pulido~Walker Mt. Veeder Estate Chardonnay will cellar well and continue to intrigue.

THOMAS RIVERS BROWN
Winemaker

Data

Estate Grown

Appellation: Mt. Veeder, Napa Valley

Varietal: 100% Chardonnay

Clones: Montrachet, Robert Young, and Wenté

Aging: 14 months in French oak (50% new barrels)

Barrel Coopers: Louis Latour and François Frères

Alcohol: 14.5% by vol.

Titrateable Acidity: 6.7 g/L

pH: 3.56

Bottling Date: December 2020

Production: 226 Cases

