

VINTAGE 2021



PULIDO-WALKER

Chardonnay

MT. VEEDER ESTATE VINEYARD

The 2021 growing season was a stellar one for Burgundian varieties in both Napa and Sonoma counties. Although it was another dry year, Chardonnay was unperturbed, making our efforts with the Pulido-Walker Estate fruit less demanding and allowing us to focus on getting more grapes on those vines.

We began laying out more fruiting canes to encourage the vines to cut down green growth and redirect their energy toward ripening. We wondered if that might be an error in a year with little rain, but it became clear that the vines needed the extra fruiting weight to keep things growing and maturing at a proper pace. We are definitely seeing better vine balance as a result, especially in the Wente Clone.

Clusters and berries were small, signaling potential for incredible density. The Robert Young Clone showed greater concentration and more desirable cluster and berry size with another year of vine age. We harvested on August 30, which we appreciate more and more as post-Labor Day heat spikes and other weather challenges become a regular occurrence. Yield was increased, especially for the Wente Clone, which approached our production goal of 3 tons per acre and accounts for the lion's share of the 2021 Pulido-Walker Estate Chardonnay.

Winemaking & Tasting Notes

Our winemaking focuses on expressing the citrus and mineral qualities of the wine, eschewing the more tropical notes that can dominate super-ripe Chardonnay. The Louis Latour barrels do an excellent job of pulling those desirable citrus and mineral characteristics out of the wine, and the new wood complements the juice well.

The final blend of the 2021 Pulido-Walker Estate Chardonnay is predominantly Wente, which contributes big bursts of sea spray and citrus fruits. This dynamic fruit is nicely tempered by the small percentage of Montrachet that brings pressed flowers, beeswax, and lanolin—classic attributes of Chardonnay that add complexity in smaller quantities. Rounding out the blend, the Robert Young Clone continues to add cut hay, white chocolate, and more citrus fruits.

The Pulido-Walker Estate Chardonnay will always be a Cabernet Sauvignon lover's wine. It is a voluminous Chardonnay, deeply textured, with excellent palate weight and impact. The 2021 vintage is a resounding affirmation of our efforts in the vineyard and confirms the emergence of a consistent vineyard profile. With our focus on continuous improvement of quality farming practices in combination with a favorable growing season, Pulido-Walker is able to offer an increased quantity of Estate Chardonnay while maintaining the exceptional quality of prior vintages. This is a reliable standout from the Pulido-Walker Mt. Veeder Estate.

THOMAS RIVERS BROWN
Winemaker

Data

Estate Grown

Varietal: 100% Chardonnay

Clones: Montrachet, Robert Young, and Wente

Aging: 14 months in French oak (67% new barrels)

Barrel Coopers: François Frères and Louis Latour

Alcohol: 14.2% by vol.

Titrateable Acidity: 5.2 g/L

pH: 3.48

Bottling Date: December 7, 2022

Production: 320 Cases

Site

Appellation: Mt. Veeder, Napa Valley
Acreage: 15 acres at the southern end of Mt. Veeder

Elevation: 650–960 ft.

Soil Composition: Weathered sandstone, fractured shale, and clay loam

Varietals: Cabernet Sauvignon (75%) and Chardonnay (25%)

Planted: 2015

