

VINTAGE 2022



PULIDO-WALKER

Chardonnay

MT. VEEDER ESTATE VINEYARD

The 2022 Napa Valley growing season was another dry one, although an atmospheric river that dumped more than four inches of rain in a 24-hour period in October 2021 set up the vines with a good amount of ground moisture as they woke from winter dormancy. Lack of spring rain impacted berry size, but we're not troubled by smaller berries or lower yields of Chardonnay in the Pulido~Walker Mt. Veeder Estate Vineyard, as these factors tend to produce fruit with excellent concentration. That was precisely the case in 2022.

Much of the talk about the 2022 vintage is focused on the post-Labor Day heat event, but as has become our custom with these vineyard blocks, we picked the fruit in August, before the temperature soared. Although yield was moderate, significantly more of the barrels that were produced made the final blend than in previous years. We attribute this to careful vineyard management and continued vine maturity as well as the August harvest date.

Whereas in previous years a single barrel of the Montrachet Clone might make the cut, in 2022 we used much more of that wine. The Wente Clone still comprises the largest share of the blend (six barrels), but the Robert Young and Montrachet are not far behind, contributing five and four barrels respectively.

The resulting wine has all the makings of a standout Chardonnay, with high acidity and moderate alcohol. The 2022 Pulido~Walker Mt. Veeder Estate Chardonnay is probably the best of the young vintages of this wine we have made.

Winemaking & Tasting Notes

What struck us as we tasted through the 2022 Mt. Veeder Estate Chardonnay lots was how excellent each one was individually. Each clone held its own in compelling ways, without upstaging the others.

The Montrachet has a pressed-flower quality that might tend toward flatness except for the great acidity and mid-palate stuffing that round it out. This clone brings pastry notes of fresh-baked brioche. The Robert Young supplies pretty, high-toned Chardonnay elements: sea spray, honeysuckle, beeswax, and lanolin. The Wente exhibits a quality that imparts palate weight and, thanks again to the acidity, maintains a consistent freshness.

We're loving the steely concentration of the 2022 Pulido~Walker Mt. Veeder Estate Chardonnay; the wine definitely veers more citrus than tropical. Broad shouldered and structured, it feels eminently age-worthy. This is a wine to enjoy upon release for certain, and one might well run the experiment of laying down a bottle to see what more it has in store. It could very well prove to be *the* wine of the vintage.

THOMAS RIVERS BROWN
Winemaker

Data

Estate Grown

Varietal: 100% Chardonnay

Clones: Montrachet, Robert Young, and Wente

Aging: 14 months in French oak (70% new barrels)

Barrel Cooper: Louis Latour

Alcohol: 13.9% by vol.

Titrateable Acidity: 5.9 g/L

pH: 3.45

Bottling Date: December 2023

Production: 345 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

