



## 2017 STA RITA HILLS CHARDONNAY

Appellation	Sta. Rita Hills
T.A.	6.1 g/l
pH	3.28
Alcohol	13.6%
Production	178 cases

### VINEYARDS

*60% Rita's Crown Vineyard, 40% La Rinconada Vineyard*

Rita's Crown Vineyard is situated at an elevation of 600 to 950 feet on a dramatic southwest-facing slope at the "crown" of the Sta. Rita Hills where it is especially exposed to marine fog and winds from the nearby Pacific Ocean. The vines are planted to the classic white Burgundy clone 124. La Rinconada Vineyard features the Dijon Chardonnay clone 76 and was planted by Richard Sanford in 1997. Located in the heart of the appellation, the site enjoys coastal fog and well-drained soils that result in rich aromatics and flavors in the wine.

### VINTAGE

Abundant winter rainfall in 2017 helped ease a five-year drought in California, replenishing soils and leaching out any accumulated salts. Mild spring weather averted any frost issues, and set the stage for excellent bloom and set. A heat spike in early September sent grape sugars soaring toward ripeness and vintners hastened the pace to keep up. Cool temperatures quickly returned, and remained cool for the rest of the harvest season. Yields ranged from average to up to 50% below average, resulting in excellent concentration and intensity in the fruit. Chardonnay from both Rita's Crown and La Encantada was harvested on September 12.

### WINEMAKING

The grapes were handpicked and gently pressed as whole clusters. After settling in tank for 24 hours, the juice was racked to 60-gallon French oak barrels for fermentation. The wine was 100% barrel fermented with 100% malo-lactic fermentation. It aged *sur lie* for 11 months in French oak, including 14% new French oak. The wine was bottled on July 31, 2018.

### TASTING NOTES

This refreshing, yet richly layered Chardonnay offers vivid aromas of white peach, honeysuckle and flint, accented by tropical notes and a hint of cinnamon stick. A medley of flavors, including lemon curd, apricot and pineapple, are enveloped in an elegant texture that leads to a pleasing toastiness on the finish. The wine's balance of richness and natural acidity ensures excellent development and even more complexity with additional bottle age.