



Dear Friends,

Our first release of 2021's showcases a vintage that will go down as one of our best. The wines are stunning – humming with energy, concentration, and tension.

These will sell out quickly, so we encourage you to place your orders as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

2021 Carex Chardonnay / Sonoma Coast

Power and Grace.

It's cold here, despite it being a little further east than Charles Heintz or Porter-Bass. Sitting low in the valley puts this vineyard close to the daily ebb and flow of coastal fog. The fog spills into the vineyard early in the evening and leaves late morning, leaving just a few hours to absorb the sun. The vineyard is planted using the Old Wente Hyde clone at high density (approx. 3,630 vines per acre) which results in small vines that need to ripen a smaller number of clusters. The increased vine shading creates a cooler environment to ripen grapes. Coupled with meager soils one thinks higher acidity and fresher fruit flavors – this is what we are looking for in Chardonnay. This site continues to impress and showcase the world-class Chardonnay the West Sonoma Coast can produce.

2021 Tasting Note

Pours an elegant pale gold. Crisp granny smith apple, lemon oil, and vanilla cascade out of the glass upon the first smell. A deceptively powerful palate showcases the chiseled minerality that has become the hallmark of this vineyard. A seemingly endless finish rounds out the experience. The best vintage of Carex to date.

2021 Charles Heintz Chardonnay / Sonoma Coast

A fresh take on a classic.

Charles Heintz is perched just east of the small town of Occidental. Situated precisely towards the coast allows for cool oceanic fog-soaked air to penetrate the vineyard, leaving the grapes to grow and mature in the most ideal of environments. Eroded soils make the vines dig deep to find water and nutrients and bring out the unique characteristics of this site. The vines sip on the salty, mineral soil, producing a wine that is classic and at the same time rooted in what is best about Sonoma Coast Chardonnay.

2021 Tasting Note

From some of the oldest Chardonnay vines on the coast. The quintessential scent of freshly cut pineapple is immediately apparent. Beyond this are subtle complexities of crushed limes and praline. The old, dry-farmed vines make themselves known on the mid-palate, with a vinous intensity balanced by crystalline freshness. A stunner.

2021 Cuvée Chloe Pinot Noir / Sonoma Coast

Brightness. Lift and balance.

Cuvée Chloe is named after one of our twin daughters and is sourced from the DuMOL O'Connell Vineyard east of the town of Occidental. Here the hills roll like waves away from the coast, lifting a kaleidoscope of soils to the surface.

The coastal fog quickly builds up at these lower elevations keeping this site cooler than many higher-elevation sites nearby. DuMOL winemaker Andy Smith planted this site with the utmost care. He chose to space the vines close together (3630 vines/acre) resulting in small vines growing intense fruit while driving the roots deep into the sandstone soils. Small, tight clusters with "hens-and-chicks" lend to an ethereal wine with an amazing intensity.

2021 Tasting Note

Fermented with 50% whole bunches. The brooding, garnet color of the wine betrays its inner levity. On the nose, perfumed tart cherry sings harmoniously with a hint of spice from the whole cluster. Vibrant and delicious at this stage of its life, the freshness and concentration demand you take another sip. This wine is not to be missed.

2021 Trout Gulch Pinot Noir / Santa Cruz Mountains

Red lightning.

In the southern Santa Cruz Mountains, vineyards find themselves at home in the canyons that run parallel to the ocean. Their orientation allows the coastal influence to reach the vines more often than other sites that we work with. Trout Gulch is tucked into one of these canyons, just east of the small seaside town of Aptos. Being planted back in the 1970s allowed this vineyard to remain a secret until more recently when our colleague Richard Alfaro took over the farming.

2021 Tasting Note

Sourced from the mid-slope of our coldest site and fermented with 40% whole clusters, this wine screams elegance. Pours a brilliant ruby, with delicate flowers and perfectly ripe cranberries competing for attention on the nose. While the crackling acid and grippy tannin assure a long life in the cellar, the energy of this wine in its youth should not be ignored.

2021 Vintage

Historic. One for the ages.

Much like in 2020, winter rains fell sparingly – accumulating a mere 7 inches in the first three months of the year. It was immediately obvious that farming this year would be a challenge with sequential years of water stress having exhausted the vines. Fortunately, our exceptional group of growers was able to retain just enough water to support our old, dry-farmed vineyards. A fairly warm March awoke the vines, with the first signs of budbreak appearing around the end of the month.

The payback for the winter droughts was a nearly perfect springtime, limiting exposure to mildew pressure. While we would have loved a bit more precipitation (we are in California after all), the temperatures were consistently moderate. The only point of concern was a hailstorm that hit the Sonoma Coast on May 11th, right around the time that flowering was occurring. Thankfully, damage to the nascent crop was minimal, and the rest of the spring carried on uneventfully.

June and July continued with the theme of unusually cold temperatures, only reaching 90 degrees on 3 occasions. Due to the lack of water earlier in the year, there was concern that a smaller crop would ripen too quickly, which would have accelerated sugar production at the expense of phenolic ripeness. Fortunately, the cooler coastal weather was on our side, slowing

down the accumulation of sugar and delaying veraison.

A comfortably warm August pushed us across the finish line, with our first pick of the younger vines at Porter-Bass occurring on August 27th. Carex, Cuvée Chloe, and TBH were picked over the next two days before a flood of Cabernet Sauvignon was harvested. Peter Martin Ray, Paratus, and our Moon Mountain sites reached their peak in the first week of September.

We were almost finished with harvest by September 20th, when we picked Mariana's Cabernet Sauvignon in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Fermentations at this point were proceeding in an ideal manner – flavors were unbelievable and the smell in the winery was intoxicating. We concluded our harvest season with a pick of Trout Gulch Chardonnay on October 13th. All the wines were gently pressed and transferred to barrel by the beginning of November.

The resulting wines are stunning, certainly some of the best we have ever made. The drought left its mark on the wines with a deep sense of concentration and power. We timed all our picking decisions to balance this textural weight with energetic, crystalline acid. We cannot wait to share these wines with you.

From our cellar to your table. Our sincerest thanks for your continued support of our family winery.

John Raytek + Team

ALLOCATIONS

Because all our wines are produced in low quantities, allocations are naturally small. PLEASE NOTE, ALLOCATIONS ARE NOT GUARANTEED, so it's best to order soon to avoid disappointment. The offer is open between February 2nd and February 16th or may end sooner if sold out.

WISH LIST – If you would like more wine than you were allocated, please use the wish list request feature. If we have wine remaining after the release closes, wish-list requests will be honored in the order they were received.

SHIPPING OPTIONS

Shipments will go out on the 2nd or 7th of March, weather permitting, depending on your selection while purchasing.