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WINE ENTHUSIAST

APRIL 2021

CHARDONNAY

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SOUGHT-AFTER SELECTIONS FROM SONOMA

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WINE ENTHUSIAST
APRIL 2021

SONOMA CHARDONNAY COMES ALIVE

Patient and tenacious winemakers who stood by the grape are seeing the fruits of their labor.

California Chardonnay is in a good place right now. It has burst forth from a long, controversial period where it was cocooned in a reputation of buttery vapor or worse.

During those dark days of derision, not everyone abandoned hope, however. Least of all those producers who are really good at working with the grape. Their tenacity is a gift. Beauty cannot forever be denied, and now, California Chardonnay, specifically from Sonoma, is finally having its moment.

"The average consumer is starting to realize that California Chardonnay does not have to be buttery, oaky and sweet," says Pete Soergel, winemaker at Lynmar Estate. "In Sonoma, we can produce Chardonnay with cleaner, brighter profiles, too. Collectively, our region is expanding the definition of what great Chardonnay can really taste like. I'm really excited by the evolution of Sonoma Chardonnay and its continued potential."

BY
VIRGINIE
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PHOTOS BY
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96 Benovia 2018 La Pommerie Chardonnay (Russian River Valley). From Zio Tony Vineyard, this beautifully exquisite white is cohesive and complex, a vibrant harmonization of golden apple, stone fruit and lemon rind. Refined tannin and oak temper the power and opulence, celebrated by a note of crème brûlée. The finish is marked by a texture and taste of wet stone and nutmeg.
abv: 14.5% Price: \$57

96 Donum 2018 Year of the Dog Single Vineyard Chardonnay (Carmel). This lovely white is light on its feet, despite its inherent power and concentration. Tangerine, grapefruit and peach flavors come to the fore with ease, integrated within a cradling of toasted oak and intriguing notes of nutmeg, clove and earth.
abv: 14.3% Price: \$65

96 Lynmar Estate 2018 Monastery Chardonnay (Russian River Valley). This is a perennially cohesive, elegant and bright wine, juicy in pear and apple with a lightness of oak. Savory seasonings of nutmeg, salt and stone give way to crushed rock. It all makes for a complex, layered and deliciously lengthy wine that is sure to stay long on the mind and palate. Editors' Choice.
abv: 14.2% Price: \$55

96 Rochioli 2018 Estate Grown Chardonnay (Russian River Valley). This wine offers incredible aromatics of crème brûlée and brioche. These rich, warming characteristics lead to more mineral-driven elements of oyster shell and stone. From several parts of the producer's estate that include Little Hill and River Block, this is a juicy, lengthy and beautifully structured wine that finishes in a swirl of grilled pineapple.
abv: 14.5% Price: \$58

PROP-STYLING BY NICOLA ANDREA