

McIntyre Vineyards Santa Lucia Highlands Estate Chardonnay USA 2017

Selected by: Master Sommelier Evan Goldstein, Master Sommelier Madeline Triffon, and Master Sommelier Tim Gaiser



Final Deductions

VINTAGE 2017

GRAPE Chardonnay

GEOGRAPHY New World

COUNTRY USA

LARGER REGION California

SMALLER REGION Central Coast

SUB REGION Santa Lucia Highlands

Rationale

The Santa Lucia Highlands are one of wine's best-kept secrets in California. It is a long, narrow AVA that runs down the western side of the Salinas Valley in Monterey. Here, oceanic influences from the cold Monterey Bay are perfect for cool-climate wines and the AVA has earned a reputation for Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. The Highland's elevated slopes are subject to bright morning sunshine, and coastal breezes that sweep down the Salinas Valley from Monterey Bay to provide a counter to this in the afternoon delaying ripening and forcing grapes to develop a thicker skin = ample flavors (flavors are in the skins!).

SLH Chardonnays are praised for their richness, silky texture, tropical fruit and subtle but present minerality. Santa Lucia Highland's moderate temperatures throughout the growing season are instrumental for preserving freshness and verve. Chardonnays can have pineapple and melon notes reminiscent of their Monterey County neighbors while the smooth and, at times creamy, textures echo those of the Russian River's Middle Reach.

Having planted more than 20% of the entire AVA, farmed nearly a third of its vineyards and vinified hundreds of wines from its grapes, Steve McIntyre is part of the AVA's DNA. His 80-acre estate vineyard, originally planted in 1973, boasts some of the Highlands' oldest Pinot Noir and Chardonnay vines. In his copious free time, Steve and his team farm 12,000 acres in Santa Lucia Highlands, Arroyo Seco, San Bernabe and Hames Valley growing or managing grapes for such notable wineries as Le Mistral, Morgan, Bernardus, Testarossa, and Miura.

Sight

BRIGHTNESS Star Bright

CLARITY Clear

COLOR DEPTH Deep

COLOR Yellow

HIGHLIGHTS None

BUBBLES No

Structure

RESIDUAL SUGAR Dry

ACID Med+

ALCOHOL Med+

PHENOLS None

TEXTURE Round / Smooth

FINISH Long

COMPLEXITY High

Aroma & Taste

CITRUS FRUIT Lemon • Mandarin • Tangerine *Condition: Fresh, Ripe, Custard / Yogurt* *Part: Flesh*

TREE/VINE FRUIT Apple (Yellow) • Pear (Asian) • Pear (Yellow/Brown) • Quince *Condition: Ripe*

STONE FRUIT Peach (Yellow) • Nectarine (White) • Nectarine (Yellow) • Peach (White) *Condition: Fresh*

TROPICAL FRUIT Mango • Melon (Green) • Starfruit • Guava • Melon (Orange) *Condition: Fresh, Ripe*

FLORAL Apple Blossom • Lemon / Lime Blossom • Orange Blossom *Condition: Fresh*

OTHER VEGETABLE Corn • Mushrooms (White) • Sweet Potatoes • Ginger / Root

HERBAL Chamomile • Verbena • Laurel / Bay Leaf

OTHER SPICES Ginger Powder • Sesame / Candy • Chinese Five Spice • Honey

ORGANIC EARTH Forest Floor • Turned Dirt / Clay

OAK AGING Yes *Oak Intensity: Medium*

OAK INFLUENCE Baking Spice • Caramel / Toffee • Toast • Vanilla

OXIDATION/NUTTINESS Hazelnut • Almond / Marzipan • Cashew

PERCEIVED WINEMAKING CHOICES Lees Contact • Malolactic (ML)