

Andrew Murray Viognier Santa Barbara County California USA 2021

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



Final Deductions

VINTAGE 2021
GRAPE Viognier/Blend
GEOGRAPHY New World
COUNTRY USA
LARGER REGION California
SMALLER REGION Central Coast
SUB REGION Santa Barbara County

Rationale

Viognier is what you would create if you were to combine Chardonnay with the floral aromas from a Hawaiian flower stand and ripe fruit flavors of a summer farmer's market.

A rich and (typically) oily white wine that originated in the Northern Rhône, Viognier has proven a worthy addition to the wine stage and is rapidly growing in popularity in California, Australia, and beyond.

Wines are often barrel-aged to echo its inherently Chardonnay-like richness. Once you become familiar with its underlying stone and tropical fruit flavors, Viognier becomes easy to identify both as a pure, single-variety wine or as a prime component of blended wines. Typical varieties used for blending Viognier include other white Rhone-style grapes from Marsanne and Roussanne, to Grenache Blanc and Hedonic. In personality, Viognier can range from light aromas of tangerine, mango, freesia, and honeysuckle to its signature peach and nectarine flavors, accented by aromas of vanilla and baking spice that come from barrel age. It has a trademark phenolic bitterness on the palate, which comes from the usually implemented skin contact during production— a practice which contributes tannins and richer pigment to the wine.

The Southcentral Coast's Andrew Murray fell in love with the emerging Rhône varieties, Syrah and Viognier, in the late 1980s while traveling through France's Rhône Valley. Eventually, he settled into his Santa Ynez home and fast became what Robert Parker, Jr. calls, "...one of the shining stars in the Santa Barbara firmament."

Sight

BRIGHTNESS Star Bright
CLARITY Clear
COLOR DEPTH Medium
COLOR Yellow
HIGHLIGHTS Green
BUBBLES No

Structure

RESIDUAL SUGAR Dry
ACID Med+
ALCOHOL High
PHENOLS Low
TEXTURE Round / Smooth
FINISH Long
COMPLEXITY High

Aroma & Taste

CITRUS FRUIT Orange • Mandarin *Condition: Ripe Part: Flesh*
TREE/VINE FRUIT Apple (Yellow) • Pear (Yellow/Brown) *Condition: Fresh, Ripe*
STONE FRUIT Peach (Yellow) • Apricot • Nectarine (Yellow) • Peach (White)
Condition: Ripe, Custard / Yogurt
TROPICAL FRUIT Mango • Pineapple • Melon (Orange) *Condition: Fresh*
FLORAL Honeysuckle • Elderflower • Freesia *Condition: Fresh*
OTHER VEGETABLE Mushrooms (White) • Sweet Potatoes • Ginger / Root
HERBAL Saffron • Chamomile • Verbena
OTHER SPICES Ginger Powder • Honey
ORGANIC EARTH Turned Dirt / Clay
INORGANIC EARTH Mineral / Rock
OAK AGING No
PERCEIVED WINEMAKING CHOICES Skin Contact