

## McIntyre Vineyards Santa Lucia Highlands Estate Chardonnay USA 2020

Selected by: MTW Tasting Panel



### Final Deductions

**VINTAGE** 2020

**GRAPE** Chardonnay

**GEOGRAPHY** Not Europe

**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 secret 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** Day Bright

**CLARITY** Clear

**COLOR DEPTH** Light

**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** Mandarin • Meyer Lemon • Tangerine *Condition: Fresh, Ripe* *Part: Peel / Zest, Flesh*

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

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

**TROPICAL FRUIT** Mango • Melon (Green) • Pineapple • Banana *Condition: Fresh*

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

**OTHER VEGETABLE** Ginger / Root • Mushrooms (White) • Corn

**HERBAL** Verbena • Laurel / Bay Leaf • Chamomile

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

**ORGANIC EARTH** Turned Dirt / Potting Soil

**OAK AGING** Yes *Oak Intensity: Medium*

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

**OXIDATION/NUTTINESS** Peanut / Shell • Pistachio • Chestnut • Almond / Marzipan

**PERCEIVED WINEMAKING CHOICES** Malolactic (ML)