



SYRAH
VELLUTINI RANCH • RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY
2020



GROWING YEAR

2020 will likely go down as one of the most memorable harvests in Martinelli history. The growing season was nearly perfect until mid-August when two nearby wildfires were ignited by a dry lightning storm. At this point in the berries' growth cycle, the skins are softening and developing flavors. Because we religiously prioritize the quality of our wines and the integrity of our brand, we made the hard but crucial decision to not make any Pinot Noir from the 2020 vintage. Unlike the other varieties that we grow, Pinot Noir is susceptible to absorbing flavors from its surroundings because it is exceptionally thin skinned. This is why we are able to pick up terroir flavor nuances even within the same AVA in this grape. Luckily, we have Chardonnay, Zinfandel and Syrah from the 2020 vintage. Chardonnay is removed from its skins as soon as it enters the winery, so contact with any smoke flavors is extremely minimal. Zinfandel and Syrah both have very tough skins and did not absorb the smoke flavors we tasted in the Pinots. Though we were only able to process half the amount of fruit we do in a normal year, we are grateful for the outstanding wines we were able to make from the 2020 harvest.

VINEYARD CHARACTER

Our Vellutini Syrah vineyard is two acres in size and was planted in 2000 to clone 470. It sits on the western edge of the Russian River Valley on a northeast slope, which receives the first ray of early morning sunshine. The Vellutini Ranch vineyards are bordered on the east by Jackass Hill and on the south by Jackass Vineyard, sharing the same Franciscan soil type.

TASTING NOTES

Engulfing aromas of dark chocolate, black cherries, and sweet barrel toast are in the nose. Full and rounded on the palate with flavors of wild berry compote and baking spices. The integrated tannins add to the rich long finish.

2019 VINTAGE

94 points Antonio Galloni, Vinous

2018 VINTAGE

95 points Wine Advocate

94 points Antonio Galloni, Vinous

WINEMAKING DETAILS

Fermentation: 100% neutral French Oak; 100% Malolactic; on the lees with daily battonage

Racked and returned to barrels 4 times

Oak: 50% new French Oak,
50% neutral French Oak, 15 months total

Case Production: 114

VINEYARD DETAILS

Soil Type: Hugo with Josephine

Rootstock: 420A

Clones: 470

WINEMAKER

Courtney Robinett Wagoner