

the hilt

The Hilt is defined by its three maritime influenced vineyards in the southwest corner of the Sta. Rita Hills appellation: Radian, Bentrack and Puerta del Mar.

The Old Guard and Vanguard wines are style-driven expressions. Vanguard is richly textured, opulent, and velvety, while Old Guard is all about structure. Old Guard wines are complex, energetic, taut, and firmly structured. Each “Guard” is a blended barrel selection of pinot noir or chardonnay in a well-defined style.

The Vanguard chardonnay opens with lush sensuality, and the finish is mouthwatering, focused, and palate cleansing. It is fermented in new French oak. The wine has a rich, opulent mouthfeel and ample mid-palate fruit. Vanguard chardonnays see around 30 percent malolactic fermentation, leaving the wines with its natural, nervy acidity.

2020

VANGUARD CHARDONNAY

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

CASES: 98

ALC: 13%

BARRELS: 11 months in 90% new French oak,
10% neutral barrels then 5 months
in stainless tank

Lemon cream, flaky pie crust, early season apricot and hint of lemon verbena. Key lime and an inner perfume (almost the ghost) of gardenia. Neroli oil. Silky beyond words and utterly seamless. Green olive oil nuances. This wine walks the ultimate balance between fruit density and electricity. Remains so light on its feet despite the weight and sunshine in the glass. Incredibly intensity to this vintage with a focus that is almost fierce today. The touch of roundness from new French oak and the elegance from the portion of malolactic fermentation takes the tense edge off before the wine accelerates to a thrilling crescendo. The essence of tasting a chardonnay berry from the 2020 growing season. This wine no doubt deserves a place next to the finest Vanguards to date.

—Matt Dees, Winemaker

95 Points

Antonio Galloni *Vinous* 2022

96 Points

Jeb Dunnuck *jebdunnuck.com* 2022



MATT DEES, Winemaker

RUBEN SOLÓRZANO, Vineyard Manager

DREW PICKERING, Associate Winemaker