

Almar

CAMP MEETING RIDGE CHARDONNAY 2021

The Place

On the western edge of Camp Meeting Ridge, at 1,280 feet, Almar perches over a deep coastal ravine, staring across into a 700-foot wall of evergreen forest—the only barrier between the vines and the Pacific Ocean. The cool breeze moves from the sea, a mere 2 miles west, through the forest, amplifying the lifted, ethereal aromas and coastal minerality of the wines from the site.

The Soil

Derived from ancient sandstone, the soils at Almar—under angular surface cobbles—are distinctively textured, with fine sands and silt mixed with rich blue and gold clays. At depths of 5 to 6 feet, the clay and sandstone are fractured, allowing roots to permeate and interact with both the rocks and the groundwater below.

The Wine

High-elevation sun tempered by cool breezes through the thick pine forest hugging Camp Meeting Ridge creates vivid tension in this Chardonnay. Warm aromas of wild fennel and dry grasses interplay with cooler mint and evergreen, while delicate lemon-lime blossoms move into a mineral-driven palate that unfolds with layers of Meyer lemon against fine-grained, chalky textures. Freshness lengthens a savory finish, with persistent green citrus and coastal salinity.

The Vintage

The winter of 2021 was marked by extremely low rainfall. It was the second year of drought conditions, cueing up a season of low yields and small berries. Through spring, temperatures fluctuated dramatically, sending mixed signals to the vines as they underwent bud break, and fruit set. That, combined with low soil moisture, slowed canopy growth. Through summer, as clusters moved toward veraison, temperatures followed a mild arc, supporting even flavor development while keeping acid levels bright. In the end, we had the luxury of timing our pick for optimum balance.