



MORGAN

CRAFTING HIGHLANDS' HISTORY



2017 TONDRÉ GRAPEFIELD CHARDONNAY

<i>appellation:</i>	SANTA LUCIA HIGHLANDS
<i>vineyard:</i>	TONDRÉ GRAPEFIELD
<i>clone:</i>	548
<i>soils:</i>	CHUALAR SANDY LOAM
<i>climate:</i>	VERY COOL, REGION I (UCD)
<i>alcohol:</i>	14.1%
<i>acidity:</i>	7.9 G/L
<i>ph:</i>	3.17
<i>cooperage:</i>	10 MONTHS IN FRENCH OAK; 33% NEW
<i>malo-lactic:</i>	95%
<i>production:</i>	96 CASES
<i>retail price:</i>	\$44.00

THE GRAPE

Chardonnay at its best is a reflection of vineyard and winemaker. For this limited release, we went to one of the Highlands' most experienced growers: Joe Alarid. Joe has been growing here long before the area was an official appellation, and is one of the S.L.H.'s most respected grape growers.

THE PLACE

Originally planted in 1997, the Tondré Grapefield is one of the Santa Lucia Highlands premiere estates. This is the second year Morgan Winery has used Tondré Grapefield fruit for both a single vineyard Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Tondré is located in the center of the Santa Lucia Highlands, just to the south of Soberanes and Garys' Vineyards.

The 2017 vintage commenced with a refreshingly wet winter with rainfall totals about 40% above average, flushing vineyard soils of built up salts, and promoting healthy root and cover crop growth in the early season. Bud break occurred in mid-March and fruit set in mid-May. The winter's rains acted as a double-edged sword, deferring the need to irrigate until June in many areas, but also requiring heavy shoot thinning, leafing, and hedging, as vine canopies were quite vigorous. Temperatures were average through August, though September saw three heat waves, making picking decisions challenging and fruit sorting imperative. The hard work resulted in wines with a rich fruit core, underlaid by an elegance from the early and mid-season cool temperatures.

THE WINE

Hand sorted grapes were whole cluster pressed, preserving fruit flavors and natural acidity. Barrel fermentation in French oak began with Montrachet yeast. Ninety-six percent malolactic conversion and 10 months aging were achieved in 33% new barrels, adding a touch of butter and rounded mouthfeel to the Tondré's tropical fruit character and bright acidity. This gives us our "Morgan Balance."

In the glass, Morgan's Tondré Grapefield Chardonnay displays a beautiful light straw and golden hue. On the nose are notes of lemon curd, matchstick, and vanilla bean, supported by lemon pith and a hint of sea salt on the palate. This is an elegant, layered Chardonnay with myriad food-pairing possibilities. It should be served at cellar temperature (not too cold) and will go well with flavorful seafood and poultry dishes. It should reward short term, proper cellaring.