



2023 SANTA LUCIA HIGHLANDS CHARDONNAY

APPELLATION

The Santa Lucia Highlands AVA benefits from a rare combination of abundant sunshine and a powerful cooling influence from Monterey Bay's deep submarine canyon. The daily afternoon winds, reaching up to 25 mph, slow down ripening, enhance phenolic development, and create wines with exceptional depth, balance, and aging potential. The long growing season, free from the threat of fall rains, allows winemakers to achieve optimal ripeness while preserving vibrant acidity.

WINEMAKER NOTES

This appellation blend reflects the cool climate of the vintage and is blended from our Rosella's, Soberanes, and Sierra Mar vineyards. Aromas of light tropical fruit, orange blossom, and a touch of cream and honey leap from the glass. Medium-full bodied, the palate offers a balance of citrus zest, wet stone, and lychee, leading to a creamy and toffee-infused finish. With balanced acidity, this is an elegant wine that begs for immediate enjoyment.

VINTAGE SUMMARY

The 2023 season rewarded patience and precision. Generous winter rains of 22.5 inches, well above our typical 14 inches, replenished vines and fostered healthy canopies, minimizing irrigation needs. Budbreak, bloom, and veraison arrived about two weeks later than average. A mild spring and summer gave way to a long, gentle ripening period. A brief warm spell in early October pushed the fruit to optimal ripeness, leading to a brisk harvest that was later than normal. In the cellar, fermentations were slow and steady, allowing the wines to develop beautifully.

Winemaker: Scott Shapley

Appellation: Santa Lucia Highlands

Farming: Sustainable (SIP Certified)

Harvest: October 7 - 21, 2023

Oak: 100% French oak, 32% new

Aging: 15 months in barrel

Alcohol: 14.7%

Acid: 3.47 pH

Production: 310 cases made

2023: 93 pts, *Vinous*

93 pts, *JamesSuckling.com*

2022: 91 pts, *Robert Parker*

91 pts, *Vinous*