

Las Jaras Wines

2019 CHARBONO

Mendocino County | Old Vines

In 2019 we got a cigar shaped amphora, and the rest is history. There is a small block of old vine Charbono at the Gary Venturi vineyard. This is a variety that was found all over the North Coast in the mid-century until it was pulled out to make room for other varieties like Cabernet Sauvignon. It's a late ripening and low acid variety that makes a wine that is big, dark and soft. We like to experiment with it and in 2019 we decided to put it into an amphora for two years and see what happens. It is really interesting to taste Charbono that is aged in a vessel that is not oak. The variety soaks up oak and it tends to make a really rich, soft wine with a bit of oxidized character. Aged in amphora, it is so pure and delicious.

Our 2019 Mendocino County Charbono opens up with a nose of raspberry, bing cherry and subtle cocoa nibs. It has a mineral expression on the palate with violet, pomegranate and raspberry notes coming through. The finish is a delicate balance with fine-grained tannin and bright acidity.

The label, created by pizza legend Joe Beddia says Bonarda, Charbono, Douce Noir. These are all analogues of the same variety; local lingo for what we call Charbono. The grape originated from the Haute Savoie region in the French Alps.

Vineyard: This is a single-vineyard wine, the grapes coming from the Gary Venturi Vineyard in the Calpella area of Mendocino County, near Ukiah. The vineyard sits on the benchlands to the west of the valley, and is farmed by Gary himself. These old vines were planted in the mid-1950s. The vineyard is dry-farmed organically. The soils are Yokayo series sandy loam that is very well drained. Due to Gary's fastidious suckering and canopy management, this is an incredibly clean vineyard, and gets only one or two sulfur dustings per season.

Winemaking: We had a quite warm growing season, but our grapes got plenty of hangtime before we picked them at 18 brix. When the hand-picked grapes arrived at the winery, we dumped them into a tank for carbonic maceration. No sulfur was added and we kept the tank jacket set at 72°F. after 7 days, we dug out the tank and pressed the grapes. We put the pressed wine into a small warm tank for fermentation. Once the tank was dry, we transferred the wine to a cigar shaped 500L terra cotta amphora for aging. The wines were aged in a cool room where the wines underwent native malolactic fermentation. We racked the barrels about two weeks before bottling. The wine was bottled without fining or filtration.



Label Art by Joe Beddia

*Production: 54 cases | ABV: 11% | TA: 5.4 g/L | pH: 3.23 | VA: 0.65 g/L | DCO2: 560ppm
Total SO2: 62ppm | RS: 0.3 g/L | Turbidity at bottling: 18 NTU*

