

## Deovlet, Solomon Hills Chardonnay

- Very small production Chardonnay from this sea-side vineyard of the Central Coast
- Beautifully delineated aromatics, maritime brininess and remarkable balance
- One of the top 4 2011 Chardonnays from the Central Coast (Vinous Media)

### The Producer

Ryan Deovlet is one of the most exciting new winemakers in the Central Coast. With each of his small-production Pinot Noirs and Chardonnays, Deovlet strives to give identity to the vineyard, a nod to the old world and a kiss of fruit. Like new producers in Burgundy, Deovlet partners with vineyards as if he were the estate owner, controlling the whole process from vine to bottle with passion, artistry, and intuition.

His inspiration to make wine came unexpectedly in 2004 during a college vacation in Hawaii, when he tasted fresh coffee from a local coffee plantation. Having grown up with a green thumb, he was struck with the desire to create a product from the land. He quickly decided to pursue wine and embarked on a 4-year exploration to learn everything he could about making it.

Deovlet sought to learn first hand from great winemakers and viticulturists, gaining apprenticeships with Stephen Dooley of Stephen Ross Wine Cellars, David Ramey at Red Car Wine Company, and Paul Hobbs of Viña Cobos in Mendoza, Argentina. Through this work he developed a vision for managing vine balance—versus vineyard yields—to achieve optimal phenolic ripeness. He also gained conviction about being impeccable in the cellar, doing things by hand, and not being dogmatic about vinification. Thorough in every detail, Deovlet next studied his customer, taking the certified sommelier exam.

Deovlet returned to California in 2008 with the aspiration to start his own label. While developing estate projects for Santa Barbara clients (including Refugio Ranch, where he is now winemaker), he landed a vineyard parcel of his own at La Encantada from Sta. Rita Hills winemaking legend, Richard Sanford. He quickly showed himself to be a true partner of the vineyard by working together on farming techniques and producing outstanding wines that give the vineyard identity. That auspicious beginning led Deovlet to develop enduring partnerships with other prime vineyards in the Central Coast.

Today Deovlet produces Pinot Noir and Chardonnay from great vineyards in the Central Coast including La Encantada, Sanford & Benedict, Solomon Hills. Each wine is produced in very small quantities (200 cases or less). His second vintage, 2009, earned more than 90 points from Parker.

### The Wine

Deovlet was drawn to this coastal vineyard for its maritime influences, nutrient-rich soils and rarity—only 10 acres are planted to Chardonnay. Deovlet works with both clones (76 and 96) from the “tenderloin” of the vineyard. He vinifies each separately and folds them together to capture 76’s zest and 96’s plushness. By naming the wine after “Phelan’s Grove”, a Central Coast site donated by a family of farmers who achieved their dreams through hard work and perseverance, Deovlet pays tribute to those who have come before him.



**Region:** Central Coast

**Appellation:** Santa Maria Valley

**Vineyard:** Solomon Hills

**Altitude:** 400-600'

**Soil:** Ocean floor sandy loams

**Varietals:** 100% Chardonnay

**Vines:** Planted in 1999; clones 76 and 96

**Planting system:** VSP

**Vine density:** 8' x 4'

**Yield:** Average 3/acre

**Harvest:** September 26

**Vinification:** Clone 76: initiated in stainless steel, then transferred to barrel where it completes primary ferment at cool temperatures and undergoes partial malolactic. Clone 96: barrel-fermented with partial malolactic

**Aging:** 15 months in barrel, 100% French oak, 20% new

**Production:** 87 cases

**Tasting Notes:** Focused, bright, and lively, with chalky texture and minerality with a medium bodied frame. Layers of lemon zest, golden delicious apple, and pear complimented by hazelnut, baked brioche, and spice. Hints of graham cracker, vanilla and tropics.

**Ratings:** 94 points, Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media

“A wonderfully focused, saline-infused wine, the 2011 Chardonnay Solomon Hills Vineyard is another fabulous effort from Ryan Deovlet. There is so much to like in the 2011, from the beautifully delineated aromatics to the vibrant fruit and the wine's fabulous overall balance. Hints of lemon and pastry add complexity on the saline finish.”