

Deovlet, Zotovich Family Vineyard Chardonnay

- A Chablis-like Chardonnay with stunning aromatics and a razor's edge of intensity
- Showcases "the sand and the sea" of this unique vineyard with his signature "kiss of fruit"
 - 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 special vineyard because of its zesty Clone 76 vines, and Chablis-like brininess from its sandy soils and ocean breezes. He pays homage to "the sand and the sea" in this wine, while also bringing out the site's tropical side by opening up the canopy to let just the right amount of sun in. The wine is aged in French oak to deliver texture, longevity and balance. An authentic and delicious expression of this unique vineyard!



Region: Central Coast

Appellation: Sta. Rita Hills

Vineyard: Zotovich Family Vineyard

Altitude: Sea level-400'

Soil: Sand

Varietals: 100% Chardonnay

Vine age: 10 years on average

Planting system: VSP

Vine density: 8' x 4'

Yield: Average 2.5-3.5 tons/acre

Harvest: Late September-early October

Production: 87 cases

Vinification: Initiated in stainless steel to dictate temperature and then transferred to barrel to complete fermentation at cool temperatures, with partial malolactic

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

Tasting Notes: Stunning aromatics of seashell, lifted by citrus fruit and layers of ripe stone fruit, along with spicy notes of ginger, white pepper, and anise all underlined by a kiss of tropical fruit shining through on the palate. Subtle French oak offers toasted hazelnut and peanut skin.

Rating: 94 points, Antonio Galloni, Vinous Media

"The 2011 Chardonnay Zotovich Family Vineyard is another gorgeous, crystalline wine. Stylistically it is similar to the Sanford & Benedict, but has a bit more palate presence."