



Sokol Blosser

DUNDEE HILLS, OREGON

*Est. 1971*

## 2015 Dundee Hills Chardonnay

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**VINTAGE:** 2015

**APPELLATION:** Dundee Hills

**GRAPE VARIETIES USED:** 100% Chardonnay

**TYPE OF FERMENTATION:** French Oak Barrels (60gallons) and Puncheons (120gallons)

**ALCOHOL:** 13.0%

**LENGTH AND TYPE OF AGING:** 100% barrel-aged in French oak; 13% new oak; -10 months sur lies post-fermentation

**DATE BOTTLED:** July 2016

**BOTTLE AGING PRIOR TO RELEASE:** 6 months

**LIFESPAN IN A PROPER CELLAR:** ~5-10 years

**NUMBER OF CASES PRODUCED:** ~800 cases

**SUGGESTED RETAIL:** \$38

**VINTAGE SUMMARY:** 2015 was a year that you truly felt that the earth is heating up. We had record heat growing degree days, almost 3000 (2200-2300 is normal) which helped us rack up the earliest bud break ever, the earliest bloom ever, and one of the earliest harvest dates ever (1992 was earlier...). The months of March and June were the hot ones pushing the vines to have bud break in March (around April 20<sup>th</sup> is normal), and push up Bloom to start in late May (Late June is normal). What does all this mean? Well, there was a lot of sweating out there in the vineyard, and a lot of thirsty workers and by the end of the season, a lot of thirsty vines. The crop was huge stemming from wonderful weather in June the previous year (this is when the next years fruitfulness in the vine is set), and a lot of fruit thinning was done to ensure that we had enough fermentation space in the cellar. The concern was not whether we could ripen all the fruit, it was if we could actually fit it all in our cellar. While it was another very dry summer, the mildew pressure was high and while we did not get much mildew at Sokol Blosser, we heard about a lot happening in the valley. We started picking for our sparkling program on August 19<sup>th</sup> (September 3<sup>rd</sup> in 2014 which was a hot year too), and started bringing in our Pinot Noir for still wine on September 4<sup>th</sup> (September 9<sup>th</sup> in 2014). We finished up bringing in fruit on September 22<sup>nd</sup> which was the day we started harvest in 2012. Crazy Non?!?!? We have never seen a year this hot in Oregon so predicting what the wines will taste like will be a shot in the dark. We've been growing grapes here since 1971, and the one thing that is constant is that every year is different and special. 2015 will be a huge serving of both.

**WINEMAKER NOTES:** These grapes were not de-stemmed or crushed, but pressed as whole clusters. The primary fermentation occurred 100% in oak and lasted nearly one month. The majority of the barrels used were the common size of 60 gallons (225L) and we also incorporated 2 larger format barrels that were double in size, 120 gallons (500L). The difference in barrel size impacts the fermentation kinetics, the wine to oak surface area balance, and oxygen exposure. Immediately following primary fermentation, the barrels were inoculated with malolactic bacteria for secondary fermentation which lasted roughly 3 months. To increase roundness in mouthfeel and balance with the acid we retained in this fruit, we stirred the majority of the barrels weekly for about 4-5 months following alcoholic fermentation. At the completion of all fermentations, our chardonnay remained on its lees for an extended period of contact prior to blending and bottling in July 2016. The variety of fermentation vessel sizes, oak, yeast and stirring regimes come together in a complex multi layered blend.