

PORTER BASS

The Porter Bass Estate sits just up in the hills that overlook the small town of Guerneville, CA (below the fog line, 9 miles from the Pacific Ocean). The vines struggle to ripen each year, providing the perfect environment to make balanced expressions of Coastal Russian River Valley wines. The property is 25 acres under vine (primarily planted to Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, with a 2 acre Zinfandel parcel named Dot's Garden). The Estate dates back to the late 1800's: planted to Zinfandel & Palomino (while the Palomino is long pulled up, some of the original Zinfandel vines still exist in Dot's Garden).

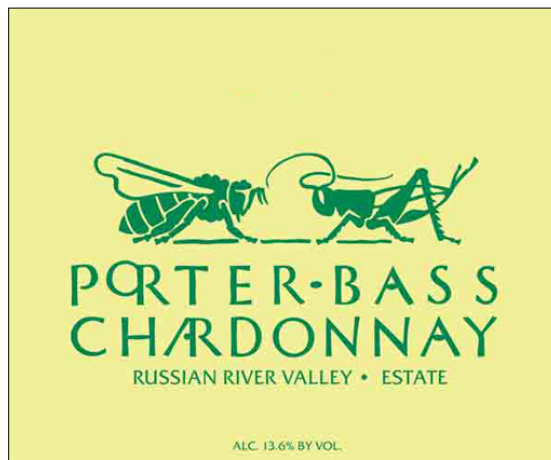


Chronicle / Craig Lee

The Bass family found this run-down, century-old, vineyard in 1980 and began the arduous process of reviving the vines. Decades of farming-induced erosion had left the soil sustaining only poison oak and blackberries. They looked to Biodynamic and organic farming strategies to create life in the soil and renew the vineyard's vitality. This restoration requires time and patience and the rewards have come over generations rather than years. They replanted most of the original Zinfandel, and all of the Palomino, leaving only a small mother block of Zinfandel. The original budwood from these vines was used in order to maintain the vineyard character.

In the winemaking the human influence is limited as much as possible. When the grapes arrive at the winery they ferment with indigenous yeasts. This imparts a greater sense of place in the wine. In the red wines the fruit is not crushed, only the stems are removed, leaving the whole berries. This gives a slower start to the fermentation and results in a greater expression of freshness. As the wines age they gain complexity but do not suffer from the premature aging that comes with over-ripe fruit. Gentle handling of the wine, using gravity flow, and minimizing the use of machines in production helps to preserve the vitality of the wine. The amount of new oak is limited to less than 40 percent. The wine is bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.

CHARDONNAY



Varietal/Blend: 100% Chardonnay

Farming: biodynamic (Demeter Certified)

Soil: granite and loam

Vine Age: 30 years

Fermentation: in neutral barrel

Aging: 14 months in neutral barrel

Alcohol: 13.6 %

Yeast: natural

Fined: none

Filtered: none

Production #s: 280 cases

The fruit in this wine is from the north-facing slope across the road from the house. These plantings are over twenty five years old with a very wide spacing and rows running east to west. A majority of the fruit is the Old Wente clone of Chardonnay, which provides structure, minerality and citrus notes. The remaining percentage is the Rued clone which is much more floral in flavor and provides richness on the palate.

Country: United States

Region: California

Sub Region: Russian River Valley

Vineyard: Porter Bass

Vineyard Size: 25 acres