

Stuhlmuller Vineyards
2018 Alexander Valley Estate Chardonnay

Proprietor	Fritz Stuhlmuller	Winemaker	Leo Hansen
Vineyards	Stuhlmuller Vineyards is located at the southern edge of the Alexander Valley, where it converges with two other highly regarded Sonoma County appellations, Chalk Hill and the Russian River Valley. On its eastern edge, the 150-acre vineyard borders the Russian River. Situated in a unique location that is part river benchlands and part hillside, the vineyard benefits from its alluvial gravel soils and the more rocky soils that comprise the hillside.		
The Clones	Five blocks of Chardonnay are planted in the well-drained, benchland soils. The famous Gauer Upper Barn clone, one of California's most sought-after Chardonnay selections, comprises 80 percent of these vines. The 2018 Estate Chardonnay is crafted primarily from a mix of Gauer, Robert Young and clone 4 fruit. From the Gauer clone, the Chardonnay derives flavors of Asian pear, spice and a natural nuttiness, the Robert Young grapes add lovely acidity and the clone 4 grapes contribute mild tropical flavors.		
The Vintage	With abundant winter rainfall, and a warm February, the 2018 growing season had an early budbreak and consistent fruit set. The early start to the season was followed by a warm summer without any significant heat events. The moderate temperatures lead to relaxed picking of a robust crop of exceptional quality. We began harvesting our Chardonnay on Labor Day and were done by September 20th, with average Brix of 21.0 to 22.5°.		
Winemaking	For complexity and texture, we did a traditional pigeage for two to three hours, and allowed one-third skin contact. To accentuate the signature fruit and natural nuttiness of our estate grapes, we also fermented this wine with 100% indigenous yeast. Aging occurred in both barrels (85%) and larger casks (15%), all of which were French oak (5% new). The wine was fermented sur lie for 8 months and underwent 90% indigenous malolactic fermentation.		
The Wine	The nose of this wine offers dazzling aromas of fresh orchard fruit, including Asian pear, green apple and white peach, as well as richer notes of lemon curd, poached quince, hazelnut, a hint of herbaceousness, and a salty minerality. On the palate, flavors of spicy pear and nectarine are supported by seamlessly integrated oak and a backbone of acidity, resulting in a lovely texture, and a long, resonant finish.		
Technical Notes	Alcohol:	14.1%	
	pH:	3.45	
	Total Acidity:	6.0 g/l	
	Production:	2,800 cases	
	Release Date:	Fall 2019	
	Bottled:	June 2019	
	Suggested Retail:	\$30.00	