

DILLON



2021 'Calyx' Chardonnay

Vineyard		Kenny Hill Vineyard
AVA		Walla Walla
Bottling Date		August 2023
Composition		100% Chardonnay
RELEASE DATE		Spring, 2025



VINTAGE NOTES

The 2021 vintage in Washington had some challenges, with a *record-breaking heat event* in late June and historically low harvest yields. Despite these challenges, the quality of the wines is outstanding. The grapes were smaller and more concentrated, resulting in wines with exceptional flavors and complexity. *There's just not much!*

The defining moment of the vintage occurred at the end of June when a **heat dome** descended upon the west coast, breaking temperature records everywhere. The Columbia Valley experienced four consecutive days with temperatures reaching as high as 118 degrees Fahrenheit. The event was well forecasted, so growers could water their vineyards. Although most growers believed their vineyards coped well with the extreme heat, the timing of the heat, coupled with other factors, **resulted in a substantial reduction in berry and cluster size.**

WINEMAKING NOTES

Pristine, whole clusters were hand-picked on a cool late-summer morning, field-sorted, lightly foot-crushed, and held overnight. The next morning, we loaded the press cylinder and pressed slowly and gently. No SO₂ or any other additives were introduced. The lightly settled juice was racked directly into a new 1000L Austrian oak cask and carefully monitored. This marks our first cask-fermented Chardonnay. Fermentation proceeded with native yeast, with minimal stirring to encourage the process. Primary fermentation lasted six weeks, followed by native malolactic fermentation, which completed in March 2022. After an extended 22 months aging on lees, the wine was bottled unfinned and unfiltered.

In grapevine flower anatomy, the calyx, made up of five sepals, forms the outermost layer of the flower. While both the calyx and calyptra protect the inner reproductive organs, the calyx remains intact, whereas the calyptra is shed when the flower blooms.

TASTING NOTES

As with all our Chardonnays, we adhere to the ancient methods established long ago in the birthplace of Chardonnay: Burgundy. Our approach is meticulously orchestrated to ensure the purest expression of the vineyard. After 22 months of barrel aging in our cellar, we racked the wine once before bottling it unfinned and unfiltered. A slight haze may be present, reflecting our commitment to minimal-intervention winemaking.

The palate is rich and full-bodied, with remarkable tension. The wine opens with notes of struck flint, caramel, smoked sea salt, and Marcona almonds. These evolve into aromas of orange blossom and preserved lemon, deepening into a core of tangerine and apricot. The broad, silky, and layered entry is balanced by vibrant acidity, leading to a clean, long-lasting finish.