

the hilt

The Hilt champions pinot noir and chardonnay from the climate margins of California's coastal winegrowing regions—Santa Barbara County's Sta. Rita Hills and Santa Maria Valley AVA's prominent among them. Two schools of winemaking form The Hilt's view of chardonnay and pinot noir:

THE OLD GUARD

The Old Guard wines encompass a restrained elegance and balance. Flavor and textural elements take on a new complexity-and minerality is often more notable. The aromas and flavors of The Old Guard tend to be more savory, and quietly forceful. A rooted sensibility overtakes brash exuberance.

THE VANGUARD

The Vanguard focuses on what is new in the world, if you will, which is often anchored by wines that are produced with lusher, fleshy, fruit-driven qualities—often referred to as baby fat—a style that owns a distinct place in the chardonnay and pinot noir field. The aromas and flavors in The Vanguard are more round and more forward—bristling with enthusiasm and elegance.

2011

THE VANGUARD
CHARDONNAY
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

CASES: 150
ALC: 13.0%
BARRELS: 80% new French oak,
20% stainless steel barrels

At first glance (and sniff) the Vanguard gives the initial impression of being a ripe, rich and dense California chardonnay. Tantalizing notes of citrus oil, sweet toasted oak, smoke and cinammon fill the glass. It quickly becomes apparent that this wine can't be summed up strictly based on the nose...On the palate, it starts with a rich, supple and luscious texture that transitions quickly to a remarkably fresh and acid-driven white. The added weight from the French oak frames the brisk acidity perfectly creating a truly balanced level of freshness and tension. It manages to remain both brisk and voluptuous at the same time. Reminiscent of fresh baked brioche with butter, a sprinkling of cinammon and a dollop of tart kumquat preserves. Impressive length. Even with the ripe finish, the Vanguard absolutely remains a wine of elegance, polish and refinement.

— Matt Dees, Winemaker

95 Points

The Wine Advocate August 2013

93 Points

Vinous Antonio Galloni July 2013

