

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.

2012

THE VANGUARD
CHARDONNAY
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

CASES: 150
ALC: 14.1%
BARRELS: 85% new French oak, 15% neutral French oak

A different beast completely on the nose from the Old Guard. White peach, gunsmoke and ripe mandarin. Pepper spice. Judicious new oak brings out a gorgeous and haunting hint of herbs and spices: the perfect complexity. Notes of caramel apple. More volume on the palate with dense white fruit and oak richness, but it never comes close to cloying. Much like its un-oaked sibling, it remains intensely light and floats across palate. Hints of smoke return on the finish and mingle with the mouth-watering acidity. Fascinating and cohesive blend of power, toast and absolute elegance. I'll dream about this finish tonight.

— *Matt Dees, Winemaker*

95 Points

The Wine Advocate August 2014

94 Points

Vinous Antonio Galloni July 2014

