

olg

"...it leaves one in a perpetual state of wanting for more."

J. Cristaldi, Decanter



Decanter

JONATHAN CRISTALDI: MY TOP CALIFORNIAN WINES OF 2023

96

pts

8 2022 OLG PINOT NOIR, OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE VINEYARD STA. RITA HILLS, SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Early in the year, I began interviewing Dave Phinney for an article that appeared in the March 2023 print issue of Decanter, and while we talked about Our Lady of Guadalupe, his vineyard project in the Sta. Rita Hills AVA of Santa Barbara County, I had yet to taste the wines. When I finally did, late this year, it was a rewarding experience. They boast Phinney's characteristically opulent style with a raging river of bright, ripe fruit flavours. Still, they are uncharacteristic of Phinney with alcohol levels under 15% and bear a remarkable freshness, imbued with the region's classic high natural acidity.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Vineyard (OLG) was acquired in 2015. After two years of composting, vines went into the ground in 2018, and plantings continued in phases. Nearly half of the large estate is planted on varying slopes and aspects. Aged 10 months in 49% new French oak, with a 3.76pH and 14.8% alcohol, the 2022 leads with a more savoury profile than the inaugural 2021 release (also a fabulous wine). Alluring candied cherry notes are scented with expressive cedarwood laced with fragrant cumin and flamed orange peel. A polished wine on entry with silky textured fruit so pure and so ripe and bright and perfectly expressive of black cherry, black plum, Red Delicious apple, and layers of baking spices. Satiny tannins glide up against a juicy acid profile, building to a finish of cocoa nib nuances and fresh garrigue notes. Juicy, structured, and delicious, it leaves one in a perpetual state of wanting for more.

Phinney's team includes Amy Whiteford, director of viticulture, Chris Hussey, assistant winemaker, and Mike Testa, the vineyard manager. Our Lady of Guadalupe is unquestionably one to watch as the vines mature. Number eight of my top 10 wines of 2023.

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

STA. RITA HILLS, CALIFORNIA

www.ourladyofguadalupe.com