

melville vinous

2014 Melville • Chardonnay Sta. Rita Hills - 92

The 2014 Chardonnay Sta. Rita Hills is rich and powerful in the glass, yet also shows good energy and overall translucence, especially for such an ample, broad-shouldered wine. Orange blossom, mint, spice and butter are front and center. With time in the glass, more tropically-leaning notes begin to develop... very nicely done.

2014 Melville • Pinot Noir Sta. Rita Hills - 91

The 2014 Pinot Noir Sta. Rita Hills is absolutely delicious. Crushed rose petals and bright red stone fruits abound. Sweet, perfumed and light on its feet, the 2014 retains gorgeous acidity to balance the richness of the fruit. This is an absolutely joyous Pinot from Melville with tons of Sta. Rita Hills flamboyance. The 2014 is a blend of sixteen different Pinot clones done with 40% whole clusters and aged in neutral oak. Picks ranged from mid August to late September. This is a very nice appellation-level Pinot.

2014 Melville • Syrah Estate - 93

Melville's 2014 Syrah Estate is aromatic and lifted in style, with distinct Pinot inflections, which I suppose is not much of a surprise. Blueberry, lavender, white pepper and menthol are all nicely delineated in this attractive, mid-weight Syrah. The 40% whole clusters are not especially evident, but are felt mostly texturally rather than in the wine's flavor profile.

2015 Melville • Chardonnay Clone 76 Inox - 90

The 2015 Chardonnay Clone 76 Inox is unusually ample, largely because of the richness of the vintage. Even with the blocked-malo style and aging in steel, the Inox is a big, ample wine. Candied lemon, almond and white flowers all meld together, but it is the wine's pure intensity that really stands out today. One of the changes Chad Melville has made is lessening the reductive character in the Clone 76. The 2015 is a delicious wine once the palate adjusts to the newer style.

2014 Melville • Pinot Noir Block M - 93

The 2014 Pinot Noir Block M is the most structured and tightly wound of these wines. Dark red and purplish stone fruits, cherry pit and white pepper give the 2014 much of its high-toned personality. The 2014 offers lovely density and yet the whole clusters give the wine a sense of weightlessness that is hugely appealing. The 80% whole clusters are mostly felt in the wine's structure, but less in its flavor profile.

2014 Melville • Pinot Noir Terraces - 92

Crushed rose petals, mint, sweet red berries, cranberries, blood orange and chalk are some of the signatures in the 2014 Pinot Noir Terraces. Focused and tense in style, the 2014 offers striking depth in an understated, mid-weight expression of Pinot Noir. This is a decidedly taut Sta. Rita Hills Pinot that could use another year or two in bottle. The Terraces was done with 50% whole clusters.

2014 Melville • Pinot Noir Sandy's - 90

Melville's 2014 Pinot Noir Sandy's is nicely lifted in the glass, with lovely aromatic presence and the mid-weight personality that is typical of the sandy soils on this site of Route 246. This is one of the more gracious wines in the lineup, but there is plenty of depth and overall texture.

2014 Melville • Syrah Donna's - 92

The 2014 Syrah Donna's is much more dense through the middle than the Estate Syrah. Here the whole clusters (100%) are more evident, but what stands out most is the wine's richness and pure power. The whole clusters are evident, but mostly in the wine's texture. Rose petal, mint, chalk and raspberries add the closing shades of nuance.

Reviewed by Antonio Galloni, Vinous, September 2016