



FROSTWATCH *Vineyard & Winery*

## Frostwatch 2016 Ophira Bennett Valley Chardonnay

**Cases produced:** 25 100% Once Used French Oak

**Composition:** 100% Clone 4

**Brix at Harvest:** 23.5

**Release:** 12/15/18

**Blend TA:** 5.0

**Suggested retail:** \$45

**Harvest date:** 9/30/16

**Blend Ph:** 3.50

**Alc:** 14.8%

**Vineyard Sources:** The Ophira Reserve comes from a select barrel of the Clone 4 Chardonnay planted in the Frostwatch Vineyard located in Bennett Valley, a relatively new AVA in Sonoma County. Ophira means “golden child” which represents our belief that it represents the best of our chardonnay production in any given year. The Clone 4 block was planted in 1997 and is planted on 5C rootstock (a low vigor root). The Clone 4 block produces fruit with ripe red apple characteristics.

**Winemaking:** The wine was harvested at night and whole cluster pressed and then barrel fermented utilizing indigenous yeast. The wine finished primary fermentation four weeks later. After primary fermentation was complete, malolactic fermentation utilizing indigenous malolactic bacteria proceeded and finished in late January of 2017. During the 4 months the wine was going through primary and malolactic fermentation, the barrel was topped, stirred and topped weekly. The purpose of topping the barrel prior to stirring is to minimize oxidation. The frequent stirring heightens the sur lees character of the wine and acts to better integrate the oak notes from the barrels with the wine. The barrel selected for this wine was a once used barrel from the Vosges Forest in France. The wine was aged in this barrel for a total of 19 months. The wine was fined and bottled unfiltered on May 14, 2018.

**Tasting Notes:** Frostwatch has steadily been gaining a reputation for its Bennett Valley Chardonnays. As set forth below, previous vintages of the Ophira have been well reviewed. The 2016 vintage, like previous vintages, exhibits generous notes of citrus and stone fruits on the nose, with a hint of crème brulee (a character common to Frostwatch Chardonnays). On the palate, the wine is bright yet possessing a luscious mouthfeel and displays well balanced fruit flavors and minerality with good acidity on a lengthy finish. The age-worthy wine will compliment many foods but has the complexity and richness to easily stand on its own.

**Winemaker:** Brett Raven

**Ratings:** 2016 vintage—not yet reviewed. 2015 vintage—95 pts - Gold Medal 2018 North Coast Wine Challenge, Double Gold Medal - 2018 American Fine Wine Competition, Gold Medal - 2018 San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition, 96 pts SOMM Journal, Linda Murphy’s Top 100 Sonoma County Wines for 2018, 90 pts Connoisseurs Guide to California Wine. 2014 vintage—92 pts Wine Enthusiast, Double Gold Medal - 2018 American Fine Wine Competition, Gold Medal - San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition.