

Florèz 'Smell Me As I Am' 2022

Who: James Jelks

Producer Summary: In 2017, after years working in wineries from Aloxe-Corton to New Zealand's Clare Valley, Santa Cruz native James Jelks was drawn back to home to launch his own wine label. As a UC Davis alum, he is conventionally trained but practices thoughtful, low-intervention winemaking. He farms some plots himself, while also sourcing fruit from well run mom and pop vineyards. James is a bit of a brinksman, eager to satisfy each dawning curiosity and tweaking his wines when new ideas come up. The Florèz wines are transparently raw, well made and bursting with energy.

Where: Santa Cruz, California

Varietals: 88% Chardonnay, 10% Pinot Noir, 2% Riesling

Viticulture & Farming Practices: Organic

Vintage Notes: "2022 became a quite compact harvest season," James tells us, "A drought year in combination with heat spells saw a quick ripening curve and a bit of a frenzy to pick in time. Fortunately we picked accordingly and were able to make wines with good freshness."

Vineyard: Blue Jay Vineyard in the Santa Cruz Mountains, Southeast slope with well-drained sandy loam and clay. Farmed by James Jelks since 2017. Very low yielding with Chardonnay vines planted in the 1970's.

Vinification: Fermented in stainless steel before bottling to finish in glass. Aged on its lees for 6 months, riddled and hand disgorged before bottling without added sulfite.

Production: 35 cases

Tasting Notes: Notes of fresh lemon and apple with mouthwatering acidity and a creamy mousse.

Fun Fact: Of this wine James writes: "With a small crop and looming bird pressure we decided to pick one of our own vineyards early to make a methode ancestrale petillant naturel."

