



2007 Chardonnay

Vintage Summary

The 2007 growing season began with a cold, dry winter, resulting in an early bud break. Spring remained dry and warm, providing a consistent climate for canopy growth. In early summer, the soils were depleted of their water holding capacity, naturally reducing yields by 30%. A mild, early summer eventually turned hot. Consistent temperatures in the mid 90's ripened fruit in late August, two weeks earlier than normal and one of the earliest in JUSTIN history.

Vineyard Practices

The 2007 Chardonnay was sourced from two vineyards on the west side of Paso Robles. Both vineyards are located in the cool, ocean influenced Templeton gap, and have soils rich in limestone. These unique soils help maintain acidity and allow picking dates to be determined on flavors. Aggressive pruning helps focus the plants stored carbohydrates on promoting strong early growth in shoots. When shoots reach around 6 to 8 inches, we remove any growth not intentionally left at pruning. The intense canopy of the Chardonnay allowed us to be very precise with the amount of sunlight intentionally left to penetrate the clusters. Skilled crews hand pulled leaves and laterals to allow fractional light into the canopy. At veraison, any clusters with green or pea size berries were removed to retain even maturity throughout the vineyard. One week before harvest, a skilled crew was sent through the block to remove any bad clusters to ensure sound fruit and even ripening.

Winemaking Practices

Our winemaking team began sampling the ripening grapes on a regular basis at the end of July. During the last few weeks before the grapes were picked, we tasted the skins, juice and seeds two to three times per week. We evaluated flavor, sugar, pH and Total Acidity to determine the exact harvest date.

A skilled crew handpicked the grapes into ½ ton picking bins. All our Chardonnay is whole cluster pressed with the heavier press fractioned off into a separate tank. We inoculated the Chardonnay with M2 yeast, a strain used for its inherent citrus characteristics. After inoculation, the juice was barreled down into 100% French oak (26% new) for barrel fermentation. Fermentations were temperature-controlled at 55 degrees Fahrenheit. After fermentation ceased, the wine was aged "sur lies" in barrel, and stirred weekly during its 8 month ageing process. To retain its acidity and citrus characteristic, the wine did not undergo malolactic fermentation. The final blend was put together on March 3rd and bottled March 24th.

Tasting Notes

Aromas of green apple, kiwi and ripe stone fruit combine with a hint of caramel and toasted oak on the nose of this wine. The entry is bright and crisp with good acid and flavors of white peach, apricot, meyer lemon and hints of mineral and vanilla. The wine finishes by coating your mouth with multiple layers of honey, cream, and a touch of spice from the "lees" stirred French oak.

Technical Information

Barrel aging: 8 months in 225-L oak barrels, 26% new
Blended: 3/3/ 2008
Barrel replacement: 20-30% annually on average
Brix at Harvest: 23.8
Harvest method: 100% hand-harvested
Bottled: March 24, 2008
Alcohol: 13.5%
Malolactic fermentation: None

Racking: None
Fining: None
pH: 3.36
Filtering: Sterile
Fermentation: 12 days with M2
Total Acidity: .82g/100ml
Barrels: Allier, Nevers
Yeasts: M2