



## 2005 Chardonnay

### Vintage Summary

The 2005 vintage began with heavily moisturized soils as the result of an extremely wet winter. Early spring remained cool and wet, providing vines with all the water necessary to promote a strong, well developed canopy. July temperatures lingered in the mid 90's, allowing healthy canopies to absorb the consistent heat and bring veraison quickly. Summer and fall were cooler than normal, allowing extended hang time for flavor development. Lower brix resulted in lower alcohols, better acidity and brighter fruit. Chardonnay was harvested in late September, 7 weeks later than normal.

### Vineyard Practices

Aggressively pruning the vines 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 clusters containing raisins 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, roughly two thirds of the juice was barreled down into 100% French oak for barrel fermentation. The remaining quarter fermented in tank to retain bright, crisp fruit characters and acidity. Both 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. The tank-fermented portion was racked off its heavy lees and topped up for storage. To retain its acidity and citrus characteristic, the wine did not undergo malolactic fermentation. The final blend was put together in March and bottled in mid April.

### Tasting Notes

Aromas of green apple, tropical fruit and ripe stone fruit combine with a hint of orange blossom on the nose of this wine. The entry is bright and crisp with good acid and flavors of peach, lemon and a hint of minerality. The wine finishes with multiple layers of honey, cream and a touch of caramel from the "lees" stirred French oak.

### Specifics

Barrel aging:	8 months in 225-L oak barrels, 40% new	Barrel replacement:	20-30% annually on average
Blended:	3/25/2006	Racking:	None
Harvest dates:	9/7/2005	Fining:	None
Brix at Harvest:	24.0	Filtering:	Sterile
Harvest method:	100% hand-harvested	Bottled:	April 13, 2006
Fermentation:	12 days with M2	Alcohol:	13.5%
pH:	3.20	Barrels:	Allier, Nevers
Total Acidity:	.80g/100ml	Malolactic fermentation:	None
Yeasts:	M2		