



2008 Reserve Chardonnay

Vintage Summary

The 2008 growing season began with an early bud break (early March) due to the extremely warm spring temperatures. Fluctuating temperatures included heat spikes, wind, and an unusual spring frost that plagued the Paso Robles area. A cool start to summer segued into consistent warm temperatures. The early bud break, combined with lowered yields from frost and a warm finish to summer created an early harvest for our Chardonnay. The block was harvested August 28th.

Vineyard Practices

The 2008 Chardonnay was sourced from an old vine hillside vineyard on the west side of Paso Robles. Located in the cool, ocean influenced Templeton gap, the soils are 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 of 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% New French oak 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 aging process. To retain its acidity and citrus characteristic, the wine did not undergo malolactic fermentation. The final blend was put together in March 4th and bottled March 23rd.

Tasting Notes

Aromas of fresh sliced green apple, kiwi and a hint of apricot combine with a hint of cinnamon and caramel on the nose of this wine. The entry is soft and supple with balanced acidity and flavors of stone fruit, mineral and a touch of toasted marshmallow. The wine finishes with multiple layers of honey, cream, vanilla and a touch of caramel from the “lees” stirred French oak.

Technical Information

Barrel aging:	8 months in 225-L oak barrels, 100% new	Barrel replacement:	20-30% annually on average
Blended:	3/6/ 2009	Racking:	None
Harvest dates:	8/28/ 2008	Fining:	None
Brix at Harvest:	23.6	Filtering:	Sterile
Harvest method:	100% hand-harvested	Bottled:	March 23rd, 2009
Fermentation:	12 days with M2	Yeasts:	M2
pH:	3.22	Alcohol:	13.5%
Total Acidity:	.95g/100ml	Malolactic fermentation:	None
Barrels:	Allier, Nevers		
Suggested Retail Price	\$26.25		