



APPELLATION: SONOMA COAST
VARIETAL BLEND: 100% CHARDONNAY
WINEMAKER: SPENCER GRAHAM
RELEASE DATE: APRIL 2010

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Pale yellow gold in color. Our Sonoma Coast Chardonnay offers the delicate intermingling of fresh fruit aromas of pear and tangerine with a subtle floral note and a pleasing minerality. Lush and opulent on the palate, this wine has a wonderful balance that is maintained by a lively vein of bright natural acidity that winds through flavors of white peach, apricot, honey and just a hint of hazelnut and slate. A vibrant yet creamy smooth finish of lemon curd rounds out the long, delicious finish.

WINEMAKING

Following a hand harvesting of grapes in late September, the Sonoma Coast Chardonnay grapes were pressed in whole clusters and fermented in a combination of new and older French oak along with specially-designed stainless steel barrels. We made this wine in a leaner, more fruit-driven style with plenty of richness and maintained the bright, lively acidity that characterizes our Sonoma Coast Chardonnay. Following fermentation, the wine was stirred twice a month while still in barrel, a gentle process that helps to heighten the richness and mouth feel on the palate.

VINEYARDS

Our Sonoma Coast Chardonnay vineyards are located just north of San Pablo Bay on Lakeville Highway outside the town of Petaluma in southern Sonoma County. Cooling influences from the nearby bays converge with those from the Pacific Ocean to create a particularly cool microclimate which is ideal for growing Burgundian varieties and provides a platform for gradual and complete development of fruit flavors and aromas. Proprietor Spencer Graham established a relationship with the grower here over ten years ago, and we continue to be very pleased with the quality and characteristics provided by these top-notch vineyards. The initial grower-producer relationship has grown into a strong friendship that includes regular meetings over lunch to discuss the weather, farming practices, grape quality and prices, the availability of fresh Dungeness crab, the amount of snowfall in Tahoe and just – life!

VINTAGE

The 2008 growing season in northern California was quite arduous and a “knuckle-biter” for both grape growers and winemakers. A dry winter and warmer than usual spring prompted vines to break bud earlier than normal, leaving them vulnerable to damaging frosts. Our Sonoma Coast vineyard was fortunate to have escaped the brunt of the coldest temperatures, however the overall crop was significantly smaller than normal years. Happily the vines suffered no further vagaries of weather, and we harvested our Sonoma Coast Chardonnay grapes at an ideal balance of ripeness and structure during the third week of September.

CELLARING RECOMMENDATIONS

This Chardonnay is delicious upon release and has the structure to continue to age gracefully in bottle over the next six to eight years.

Elizabeth Spencer

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