



APPELLATION: MENDOCINO
VARIETAL BLEND: 100% CHENIN BLANC
PRODUCTION: 20 BARRELS
WINEMAKERS: SPENCER GRAHAM

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Brilliant white gold in color. Effusively aromatic, our Mendocino Chenin Blanc offers vibrant aromas of summer melon, white peach, straw and pear. As the wine opens up, notes of jasmine and wet slate appear. Bright and focused on the palate, the wine has flavors of tangy lemon drop which give way to grapefruit and Bosc pear. A vein of minerality persists through the finish, where the vibrant, crisp acidity maintains the wine's brilliant focus.

WINEMAKING

Our 2008 Chenin Blanc was hand-harvested in mid-September, whole-cluster pressed and fermented in stainless steel. Temperatures during fermentation were kept as low as possible in order to preserve the grape's freshness and more delicate aromas. Following fermentation, the wine was aged for a short time on the lees in tank in order to broaden the mid-palate and to add to the complexity of the flavor profile.

VINEYARDS

This Chenin Blanc comes from a 30-year old vineyard in Mendocino with a slightly northwestern aspect. This subtle orientation away from the direct summer sun assured that our Chenin did not overheat in the late afternoons during the growing season. Therefore, as the fruit matured on the vine, it developed complexity while retaining the natural acidity and distinctively elegant aromatics that are a hallmark of the variety. While a very popular variety in the Loire region of France, Chenin Blanc is still an underappreciated grape variety in California. Only a few vineyard owners have recognized this grape's potential for being made into high quality wine. Elizabeth Spencer has made a commitment to producing wine from this delicious, yet often overlooked, variety.

VINTAGE

The 2008 growing season was an arduous one for northern California grape growers. A dry winter prompted an earlier break bud than normal, leaving the developing vineyards vulnerable to the potential of damaging frosts. Our Mendocino Chenin Blanc vineyard escaped the brunt of severe cold and the season progressed with more moderate temperatures, however, the crop was smaller than normal. The vines enjoyed a slow, even ripening period, and we harvested ripe grapes with ideal balance and structure during the second week of September. Our Chenin Blanc fared well with the moderate climactic conditions that characterized most of the season and which resulted in lower yields.

Elizabeth Spencer

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