



Winery & Vineyards

1999 CHARDONNAY “GRAND CUVEE”

Estate Grown, Santa Barbara County

Winemaker's Notes

There are a lot of good wines out there. Actually, at this point, there are quite a few great ones. So what is it that makes a wine transcend the field? For me it is full amplification of terroir and winemaking style, with, at the same time, perfect balance. Other than vineyard location, the factors that bring this together are; great farming, great winemaking, and a great vintage.

In my wine*growing* I have become a big fan of hitting “sweet spots”. By this I mean practicing an integrated method of determining what inputs the vines need and when they need them, and then responding to those needs as quickly as possible. This means that more effort (pruning, cover cropping, leaf thinning, etc.) is front loaded into each vintage. Because more resources are put into every step of the farming, the financial risk is greater. But making this investment is, in my opinion, the only way to seize the opportunity of a great vintage, and produce world class fruit.

In my wine*making* I have become a big fan of developing wine styles that act as harmonious frames for the fruit. Indeed, with this 1999 Grand Cuvee Chardonnay, the dynamics of the vineyard and cellar are well united. 1999 was a great vintage for Chardonnay, and we were ready for it.

The particulars on this wine look something like this:

- a California location (terroir) for Chardonnay that is ideal
- mature vines 15 to 20 years old
- a cool, wet 1999 spring that “shattered” the crop to a natural 1 1/2 tons per acre
- a long, cool 1999 growing season
- perfect canopy management, leading to perfectly ripe fruit
- hand picked and selected fruit
- gentle whole cluster pressing
- successful primary and malolactic fermentations in new and seasoned French oak barrels crafted by my favorite cooper, Tonnellerie Remond
- a successful “elevage”, i.e. ripening (aging) the wine on its lees for 10 months

Technical Notes

VARIETAL: 100% Chardonnay, Santa Ynez Valley, Estate Grown

VINIFICATION: 100% barrel fermented; 100% malolactic fermentation

TIME IN BARRELS: 10 months on lees

TA: 7.1 g/L

pH: 3.33

ALCOHOL: 14.5%

BOTTLING DATE: September 23, 2000

CASES PRODUCED: 436 cases 750 ml; 6 - 3 Liters

RELEASE DATE: May 2001