

NAPA VALLEY QUILT

“FOR NAPA VALLEY QUILT CHARDONNAY, WE LAYER COOL AND MODERATE CLIMATE VINEYARDS TO CREATE A BALANCED, YET CLASSIC STYLE. I WANT THE FRUITFUL NATURE OF THE PATCHWORK OF NAPA VALLEY TO SHINE. OUR PHILOSOPHY FOR QUILT HAS ACCOMPLISHED THAT GOAL.”



JOSEPH WAGNER, FIFTH-GENERATION NAPA VALLEY WINEMAKER

2017 NAPA VALLEY CHARDONNAY

For this Chardonnay, we relied on vineyards from the Oak Knoll and Carneros Districts where the climate is distinctly cooler and foggier than the northern environs of Napa Valley. Carneros is a world unto itself. For one, much of the soil is sedimentary clay loam with heavy gravel due to the region's proximity to the mouth of the valley. This soil, combined with the chilling winds of the marine influence, yields a Chardonnay grape with impressive structure and a flinty minerality.

2017 GROWING SEASON

The Chardonnay vineyards located in the Oak Knoll and Carneros AVAs are well suited to the production of Chardonnay that beautifully represents the Napa Valley. The 2017 growing season was marked by abundant rainfall during the winter period and early spring grapevine growth that was slightly delayed due to the cool and wet weather. However, from late April through May, the weather was warm and vine growth was both strong and vigorous. The summer weather was exceptional with very warm days that were not too hot and warm evenings that allowed the crop to set and ripen evenly. While we experienced an abnormal heat event in early September, the weeks following were mild and the fruit was picked and delivered to the winery with good acid, excellent flavor development, and fantastic quality.

WINEMAKER NOTES

For our Quilt Chardonnay, the winemaking process begins when we call a pick. Regular visits and assessment of each block direct us to harvesting at the right moment. Our assessment consists of testing sugar levels, acidity and pH, but more importantly, waiting for phenolic/physiological maturity. We want autumn to have set in, with hard, brown seeds, copper canes, and yellowing of the canopy and a slight 'tan' to the golden clusters. This gives us the assurance that we will have no green tones in the wine and that this Chardonnay will be opulent and showy. Once in the cellar, we whole cluster light press in a bladder press. The free run juice settles for 48 hours at which point we rack off heavy lees and barrel-ferment the wine in 59 gallon French oak barrels (70% new) for 15 months. Fermentation can last 45 or more days in the cool cellar, lending weight to the wine with lees stirring during the extended fermentation. We then undergo 100% malolactic fermentation while still on lees to achieve additional creaminess and complexity. We delay sulfur additions as long as possible to maintain the characters that formed through each process and allow the wine to finish its aging with minimal racking.

TASTING NOTES

COLOR: Pale yellow with golden highlights.

AROMATICS: Crisp yellow pear, fuji apple, meyer lemon, honey, and a hint of caramel.

PALATE: Meyer lemon zest, nectarine, ripe pear, yellow apple, and kiwi with intertwined notes of cantaloupe and pineapple.

STRUCTURE: Bright, medium bodied, and rich with smooth and generous layers. Complex, mouthwatering acidity with a lively finish.

FOOD PAIRING

Cast iron skillet chicken with garlic butter fingerling potatoes, caprese salad, or garlic shrimp tossed in white wine sauce topped on a bed of angel hair pasta.



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