

STEMMLER

2008 ESTATE GROWN CARNEROS CHARDONNAY

The 2008 Chardonnay is a combination of three sites from the Donum Estate, the oldest of which is Ferguson planted in 1974 to the famous Wente Selection. The old vine depth of the Wente is what provides the backbone of our Chardonnay. A younger block of Dijon clone brings sweetness of ripe fruits, and lastly our Southern exposed block at Donum planted to Wiemer and Monticello is what provides crisp acidity and perfume.

Ripe mouth-watering Granny Smith apple and rich lemony aromas combine with scents of citrus blossom and honeysuckle in the seductive nose of this Chardonnay. This heavyweight wine has a depth of melon engulfed in a fleshy texture with undertones of citrus and a long mineral finish..



FRUIT: 100% Carneros Estate Grown Chardonnay

HARVEST DATE: September 30 - October 16

PRODUCTION: 875 cases

ALCOHOL: 14.1%

PH: 3.28

TOTAL ACIDITY: 8.0g/L

BARREL PROGRAM: 40% New (Sirugue)

FERMENTATION DETAILS:

Each block/clone is hand harvest and whole cluster pressed separately to temperature controlled stainless steel tank. The juice is cold settled over night and drained to barrel for a cold one long fermentation. After primary the wine is allowed to only undergo partial malolactic fermentation. The wine is aged on its lees and stirred weekly in 40% new Sirugue barrels. The final blend is assembled just prior to bottling consisting of Old Wente, Wiemer and Dijon selections.

WEATHER ATTRIBUTES:

A dry winter gave way to a very cool spring with two major frosts, one late in March and the other a month later, that caused major damage in our vineyards. Our Russian River vineyard lost two-thirds of its crop to frost, while in Carneros we lost around 20%. Most of April was cool which added to the uneven shoot growth caused by the frost. Our vineyard team worked hard to even out what Mother Nature provided. A mid-May heat spike pushed the season into gear, and flowering happened rather quickly causing some shatter and small berries.

More heat spikes followed in June and July. Due to the small crop size, the vines managed these heat events well. August was cool but ended with another heat spike that stretched into early September -- the beginning of harvest for most Pinot producers. We were able to wait through the heat in most of our blocks because our sugars were not as far along when higher temperatures hit. Sugars jumped, but not to the point of having to harvest. Cool temperatures followed which gave us some wonderful hang time.

Most of our fruit was harvested in late September and early October. Tasting these wines after a season from hell puts a smile on my face. You just never know. Cheers!

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