

GUNDLACH BUNDSCHU

2003 RHINEFARM VINEYARD CHARDONNAY

VINTAGE

The 2003 growing season presented many challenges as well as, ultimately, very high quality fruit. Springtime frosts, rain and hail reduced crop size for many varieties. Warm temperatures interspersed with early summer showers increased mildew potentials, testing the vigilance of vineyard managers. As harvest time approached, spikes in daytime temperatures further tested the endurance of vine and man alike. Mercifully, there were no rain events during the harvest period, allowing ample maturity time. Despite Mother Nature's curve balls, the resulting fruit was rich, showing good concentration of varietal character.

VINEYARD

The Chardonnay on Rhinefarm is over 30-year-old Wente clone, and grows in the lower block of the vineyard, a section that sits literally across the street from the Carneros appellation border and shares the cooling benefits of the fog from the San Pablo Bay. The topsoil is only 22" to 30" deep, consisting of Huichica clay loam with occasional deposits of small stream gravel that has been deposited over centuries by the adjacent Arroyo Seco Creek. Beneath this layer is Carneros Bay sediment that naturally restricts vigor. The climate and soil combine to maximize hang time and intensity of fruit expression and restrict average yields to 2.4 tons per acre.

WINEMAKING

The Chardonnay vineyard blocks were divided into twelve lots which were picked and vinified separately. All fruit was hand picked in the cool night hours and sent to press whole cluster. Free run and press fractions were kept separate. After 24 hours of cold settling in stainless steel tanks, the juice was racked and inoculated with prepared yeast, including Montrachet, Cepage Chardonnay, and Y3079 strains. All juice was barrel-fermented in French oak barrels, 25% new, then aged sur lies for 9 months, with various frequencies of lees stirring. Overall, 30% of the blend was allowed to undergo malolactic fermentation to add a subtle balancing richness to the crisp mineral aspects of the palate.

WINEMAKER TASTING NOTES

Aromas of white pear, pineapple and vanilla with hints of allspice characterize the nose. Elegant, complex flavors of sweet and sour lemon and a stony, mineral character fill the palate. Excellent acidity and balance culminate in a focused, fruit-driven finish.

ANALYSIS

Cases produced: 2,791

Harvested September 6 - 25

Brix: 25.3

TA: 0.77 g/100ml

pH: 3.36

Bottled July 2004

Alcohol: 14.5%

TA: 0.65 g/100ml

pH: 3.56



Jeff Bundschu, Sixth Generation Vintner



Linda Trotta, Winemaker

