

# GUNDLACH BUNDSCHU

## 2004 RHINEFARM VINEYARD CHARDONNAY

### VINTAGE

An historically early start to the growing season resulted in the 146<sup>th</sup> harvest on Rhinefarm being the earliest on record. Unseasonably toasty temperatures in February were followed by rather balmy conditions throughout the spring and summer, allowing the slow development of complex flavors. Shortly after the start of harvest on August 15<sup>th</sup>, a significant heat spell resulted in crop reduction of some blocks that were very near optimum maturity, particularly Merlot. The final fruit of the season was brought in on September 30<sup>th</sup>, making 2004 the first vintage in Rhinefarm history that saw no grape harvesting in the month of October. In general the vintage can be characterized by low yields and high intensity of varietal flavors.

### 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 to barrel for fermentation. Yeast strains varied from lot to lot, and included prepared yeast strains Montrachet and Y3079 as well as indigenous strains. All juice was barrel-fermented in French oak barrels, 25% new, then aged sur lies for 9 months, with 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 lemon cream and pineapple with notes of allspice lead to a broad palate bursting with ripe tangelo and citrus flavors, complex mineral character and notes of toasted almond and vanilla. Excellent acidity and balance and a creamy mouthfeel, culminating in a focused, fruit-driven finish reminiscent of lemon meringue.

### ANALYSIS

*Cases produced: 2,250*

*Harvested September 2004*

Brix: 26.5

TA: 0.74 g/100ml

pH: 3.33

*Bottled July 2005*

Alcohol: 14.1%

TA: 0.68 g/100ml

pH: 3.49



Jeff Bundschu, Sixth Generation Vintner



Linda Trotta, Winemaker

