



CHATEAU MONTELENA WINERY

2010 NAPA VALLEY CHARDONNAY WINEMAKER'S NOTES

“Slow and low,” that was the tempo... The 2010 vintage was the second in a string of three cooler and later-than-average harvest years. We saw mild conditions throughout the growing season and essentially no heat right up until the third week of August when a beastie heat wave rolled in. This heat event caught a lot of growers with their proverbial pants down – they had really opened up the canopies in order to reduce the mildew pressure and get some sun on the fruit – and resulted in widespread sunburn and crop loss for much of the North Coast. This was not the case for our Chardonnay vineyards as we take a more restrained approach to canopy management and still had plenty of shade on the fruit during that heat swell; thusly we avoided any flavor or crop damage.

The harvest itself was a long one, starting late in the third week of September and stretching a full 28 days – we brought in the last of the Chardonnay lots in mid-October. This was one of those years where patience was the order of the day, and we were rewarded with excellent flavors and great juice chemistries. The result is another fantastic Montelena Chardonnay.

Pale golden color in the glass, with the faintest hint of green belying its youth, this Chardonnay opens with rich and intense aromas of lemon, lime leaf, citrus flowers, and a touch of honey before moving into spicy pie crust and a hint of mascarpone creaminess – all topped with a nice flinty finish. The citrus trend continues on the palate with a firm acidity and tropical star fruit. This wine has excellent mouthfeel with big full texture and a mouthcoating creaminess that nicely complements the white stone fruit (nectarine and peach) and slight green apple fruit flavors. On the finish, look for a pleasantly subtle marzipan nuttiness.

Cameron Parry, Winemaker
July 2012

Harvest Dates Sept. 17 to Oct. 15
Alcohol 14.1%
Barrel Aging 10 months, 100% French, 8% New
Bottling Date August 2011
Release Date Fall 2012