

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

2019 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.

2019 GROWING SEASON

The 2019 growing season began with an unseasonably warm and extremely dry winter until a series of cold winter storms brought much-needed precipitation in mid-January. The cold, wet weather continued through March, with temperatures 4-6°F below normal and rainfall 150-250% above normal. This delayed the onset of bud break and early grapevine growth. April was warm, sunny, and dry, which led to rapid grapevine growth that persisted well into early May. In mid-May, cold, wet weather returned with some of the highest rainfall totals ever recorded for the month in Northern California. Summer was mild and warm, which allowed the crop to size up uniformly during bloom and fruit set. Then, in August, the weather turned hot and veraison was completed for all varieties across Napa County. Despite the high temperatures, a persistent marine layer kept the evenings cool in the valleys and on the hillside vineyards. Due to favorable autumn weather, the fruit ripened evenly while retaining vibrant acidity and developing exceptional flavors and brilliant colors. We began picking the Chardonnay grapes in early September and finished harvest by the third week in September.

WINEMAKER NOTES

For our Napa Valley 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 wait 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 straw yellow with golden hues.

AROMATICS: Honeysuckle, crisp green apple, persimmon, white fig, and Asian pear with notes of blanched almonds and floral notes.

PALATE: Juicy pineapple and mango, Fuji apple, papaya, and honey followed by hints of lemon custard and toasted almond.

STRUCTURE: This is a classic Napa Valley Chardonnay with bright acidity, medium bodied, and a smooth, creamy finish. Complex and well-balanced with a lively finish.

FOOD PAIRING

Chicken Alfredo pasta, Salmon with feta and Arugula on a bed of Quinoa, or Arugula, feta, and pomegranate salad with a light honey mustard dressing.

