



NAVARRO *Vineyards*

2008 Mendocino Chardonnay

Some Chardonnays get your attention with butter and oak but it is the perceptible fruit in this bottling that makes you do a double take and take another sip. We wish we could replicate the juicy apple-pear essence every year. The yields were especially low in 2008; our vineyards averaged only 1.8 tons per acre. The weather was nippy during harvest allowing the fruit to develop full flavors without excess sugars by ripening very slowly. The clusters were especially cold when we harvested and destemmed the fruit. The largest block escaped the frost and the grapes had balanced acidity when we harvested so a secondary *malolactic (ML)* fermentation to reduce acidity was ruled out.

Our largest lot of Chardonnay had balanced acidity when the grapes were harvested. This eliminated the need for a secondary malolactic fermentation which reduces a wine's apparent acidity. We decided to age the lot in seasoned oak ovals, on the yeast, for seven months.

We've experienced all these conditions before, but we think the rich fruity tone is mostly due to the predominance of the lot made from old vines without ML which constitutes 2/3's of the blend. The wine was aged *sur lie* in ovals and puncheons; the oak flavors are restrained relative to the fruit zest but the round mouthfeel from aging on the yeast lingers. The remaining third was from three small blocks planted to the early ripening *Dijon* clones; these grapes were barrel fermented and underwent *malolactic* fermentation as we do for our *Première Reserve* bottling. The aromas are bright suggesting white spring flowers. The grape flavors are green apple and pear with just a hint of butter from the secondary fermentation. The roundness from aging *sur lie* in oak casks is adorned with an intriguing garnish of candied kumquats. **Gold Medal winner.**

Specifications

Harvested: Oct. 13 to 18, 2008

Sugars at Harvest: 23.6° Brix

Bottled: June 22 to 24, 2009

Cases Produced: 2653

Alcohol: 13.4%

Total Acidity: 7.8 g/L

pH Level: 3.32