



CHARDONNAY Willamette Valley 2007

**Wine Spectator:
90 points & Smart Buy
Dec. 09**

WINE BACKGROUND

- At first, Oregon pioneer winegrowers planted using clones that had been selected by California's wine industry. With Chardonnay, the selections were very late ripening - in Oregon, two or three weeks after Pinot noir.
- In 1974, David Adelsheim worked harvest in Burgundy and realized that, because their vines tend to produce fewer and smaller grape clusters than the California selections, Chardonnay ripened in tandem with Pinot noir. He realized that planting clones with these characteristics should be a boon for Oregon's wine industry.
- David followed through by helping create a system that dealt with all the red tape and mandatory quarantines - in place to protect America's vineyards from new diseases - to import a selection of both Chardonnay and Pinot noir clones. These so-called "Dijon" clones were eventually released for planting in 1989.
- As the vines have matured, we've found we can produce excitingly rich Chardonnay with next to no oak influence at all.

GROWING SEASON

- Bud break occurred during the third week of March, and bloom during the second week of June, both normal times in the north Willamette Valley for these events.
- Harvest began in mid-September with two weeks of perfect weather and ideal picking conditions. This was followed by a short period of rain. We met these challenges by taking extra precautions in both picking and sorting to insure only the very best fruit made it into the fermenters.
- Chardonnay was picked in the last week in September and the first week in October.

VINEYARDS

- This wine is crafted predominately from estate sites in the Chehalem Mountains - Love (29%), Quarter Mile Lane (18%), Boulder Bluff (12%), and Bryan Creek (3%). Grapes from Zenith Vineyard located in the Eola Hills made up 37% of the blend.
- The contributing vineyards are sited on both basaltic-origin and sedimentary soils. Basaltic (clay loam) soils hold enough moisture to get the vines through our summer drought without irrigation. The sandstone-based sedimentary soils require clean cultivation to reduce competition for moisture and, in some years, a bit of irrigation.

WINEMAKING

- Gentle, whole-cluster pressing was used to separate the juice from the skins as quickly and as cleanly as possible for this Chardonnay.
- The majority (92%) of the juice was fermented in stainless steel tanks to retain fruit purity, flavor and aroma. The remaining juice was fermented in neutral barrels to augment textural richness and create a more balanced and complex wine. In order to preserve freshness and acidity, this wine did not undergo malolactic fermentation.
- The wine was bottled on April 7, 2008.

"This wine features spicy aromas and smooth texture. Nutmeg and fig aromas slowly give way to Gravenstein apple and honeydew melon flavors. We've found that it pairs well with rich seafood and poultry dishes, as well as hard Alpine cheeses - (comté, fontina, cave-aged gruyère.)"

Dave Paige, Winemaker



Composition: 100% Chardonnay
Alcohol: 13.8% by vol
pH: 3.37
Production: 1,199 cases (750 ml)

