

2002 Chardonnay

Columbia Valley, Washington

THE WINE

During the grape growing season, Eastern Washington boasts warm summer days followed by cool nights, ensuring that grapes ripen fully while retaining ample natural acidity. Our 2002 Chardonnay shows that classic balance. Aromas are of pear, baked apple, cream, toast and fresh baked bread. On the palate, the flavors are soft, and round, with pear and vanilla with toasty, smoky notes and a crisp finish. This would be a great accompaniment to roast chicken or linguine with clams.

THE VINTAGE AND VINEYARDS

A normal year in terms of total heat accumulation, 2002 was characterized by unseasonably hot weather in July followed by a normal August and an exceptionally dry and temperate fall. The dry, breezy fall weather led to optimal ripening. We began harvesting Chardonnay on September 10 and finished on October 1. Our Chardonnay is a consistent blend from a number of vineyards, including Sunnyside, Zephyr Ridge, Vista, Flying M and Rothrock.

THE WINEMAKING

Since it's important to emphasize effusive fruit character in this Chardonnay, we ferment the majority of the juice (68%) in stainless steel. That tank-fermented portion of the wine retains its crispness and fruit, while the barrel-fermented portion develops additional roundness, complexity and toast and vanilla notes. Forty percent of this wine underwent malolactic fermentation following primary fermentation, and all of the new wine ages sur lie (in contact with the yeast lees) for five months in either French or American oak barrels or in tank.

THE NUMBERS

Appellation: Columbia Valley

Varietal Percentage: 100% Chardonnay

Brix at Harvest: 23.3°

TA: 0.60 g/100 ml

pH: 3.52

Alcohol: 13.5%

Release Date: April 2004

