

2003 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 2003 Chardonnay shows that classic balance. Aromas are of pear, citrus vanilla, cream, and hazelnut. The wine has complex Chardonnay character. Bright pear and cream flavors abound on the palate with a roundness acquired from the barrel fermented portion (31%). The finish is crisp. This would be a great accompaniment to broiled wild King salmon or fettuccini with a white clam sauce.

THE VINTAGE AND VINEYARDS

A normal spring was followed by a hotter than average summer. Cool weather in early September drew out the harvest allowing for longer hang time for the grapes. An unusually late warm spell in late September and October allowed ripening to finish well in all varieties. We began harvesting Chardonnay on September 4 and finished on October 7. Our Chardonnay is always a consistent blend from a number of vineyards, including Sunnyside, Zephyr Ridge, Vista, Andrews and Rothrock vineyards.

THE WINEMAKING

Since it's important to emphasize effusive fruit character in this Chardonnay, we ferment the majority of the juice (69%) in stainless steel. That tank-fermented portion of the wine retains its crispness and fruit, while the barrel-fermented portion develops additional roundness and complexity. Blending the lots results in a lively, multi-layered wine. Thirty-four 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 both French and American oak. The wine was lightly filtered then bottled and aged for a year before release.

THE NUMBERS

Appellation: Columbia Valley

Varietal Percentage: 100% Chardonnay

Brix at Harvest: 23.5°

TA: 0.64 g/100 ml

pH: 3.48

Alcohol: 13.8%

Release Date: March 2005

