

Cycles GLADIATOR

2013 CHARDONNAY



The Central Coast of California is synonymous with Chardonnay. The number of regions within the appellation where the grape is grown is mindboggling. From the Livermore Valley, through the Salinas Valley, down to the southernmost parts of Santa Barbara, Chardonnay is omnipresent. What all of these regions have in common is the proximity of the Pacific Ocean. Marine influence is key. Chardonnay, like Pinot Noir, likes weather that's not too hot during the day and not too cold at night. But what makes the Central Coast so ideal for Chardonnay are the wildly disparate range of flavors and aromas that are as different and unique as the individual sub-regions themselves. Apples, tropical fruits, citrus, stone fruit, we have it all. That's what makes it so much fun to make Chardonnay here. It's like assembling the ideal fruit salad.

Chardonnay is a non-aromatic white varietal. That means that it gets its characteristic smell and flavor from the processes that are used. When to pick, how to pick, how hard to press, what yeast to use, oak or no oak, malolactic fermentation. These are all considerations that have to be taken into account when making Chardonnay. Any slight variation can radically change the flavors and amount of aromatics that are released. I think making good Chardonnay is the hardest wine to make correctly as evidenced by all the bad Chardonnays out there. All of this was taken into account when producing our 2013 Chardonnay, which is a blend of fruit from the Arroyo Seco appellation of Monterey and the Livermore Valley. The grapes were harvested at night to provide hard skins with which to press, settled in tank, racked and fermented slowly with a combination of high-ester liberating yeasts. These are the aroma compounds. The Arroyo Seco component yields tropical notes and when combined with the stone fruit from the Livermore Valley, makes a fat, sweet style of wine that I felt would be great as both an appetizer as it does an accompaniment to food.

Varietal:
100% Chardonnay

Appellation:
100% Central Coast

TA: 0.62 gms/100ml

pH: 3.5

Alcohol: 13.7%

Oak regimen:
60% Stainless Steel,
15% New French,
5% New American,
20% Neutral oak

The aromatics really jump out of the glass. Papaya, peaches, and pineapple on the nose with just a hint of SEXY TOASTED OAK! Ha! I had to say it. If you don't believe me, read the back label. Nectarines and other stone fruit on the forepalate. The wine fleshes out in the mouth with ripe, round flavors of peach juice and pineapple. Soft acidity and a lush texture wrap around the tongue towards the back of the palate. This wine as mentioned before, makes for a nice post work quaff. It requires foods with rich, creamy flavors. I can confirm that scallops in an orange beurre blanc is fantastic. Made that the other day. Also chicken alfredo, seafood fettuccine, or any pasta smothered in a cream sauce. Enjoy!

Adam LaZarre . Winemaker