

2003

## Chardonnay

SONOMA COAST

Label Artist:

Colleen Teitgen

**Winemaking** | Roughly 75 to 80 percent of the Chardonnay grapes come from Stiling Vineyard in the Russian River Valley where we source our Pinot Noir. The remainder hales from Petersen Vineyard, a true Sonoma Coast property in South-West Sebastopol. Dijon 95 and Sees are the primary clones. Harvested from early to mid October, grapes were whole-cluster pressed to tank where the juice settled for 24 hours before going to French oak barrels (60 percent new) for indigenous yeast fermentation, followed by slow malolactic fermentation. Lees were stirred once a month to add roundness and body. Gently pressure-racked to tank, the final blend was gravity-returned to barrel where it spent a total of 15 months before bottling with light fining but no filtration.

*Many Chardonnay spend only 9-10 months in barrel, 5-6 months less than ours. While it may seem counter-intuitive, we find the extra time in barrel allows the wood to integrate more completely with the fruit and results in a finished wine that is more harmonious; a true example of the whole being greater than the sum of its parts.*

**Tasting Notes** | A clean, golden-straw hue is complemented by scents of lemon, green apple, ripe pear, plus a touch of caramel, honey and vanilla in this classic Sonoma Coast Chardonnay. The palate reveals a sensuous mouthfeel and a subtle yeasty backbone, both buoyed by a fresh acidity and subtle floral notes that keep this beauty light on its feet throughout the meal. A cooler climate Chardonnay to its core, you won't feel like this one belongs on your popcorn.

**Analysis** | pH: 3.4  
TA: 5.7 g/L  
Alcohol: 15.5 %  
Bottling Date: January 24, 2005  
Release Date: April 30, 2005  
Total Produced: 9 Barrels

**Philosophy** | *We prefer to follow the grapes' lead and offer gentle care as the wine emerges from the juice. If a wine asks for help, we provide it. If a wine is happy on it's own, we simply let it be and celebrate its evolution.*