

# 2010 Chardonnay

Los Chamizal Vineyard, Sonoma Valley

## 100% Chardonnay

**The Vineyard:** Peter Haywood's Los Chamizal Vineyard climbs the steep walls of a small valley near the town of Sonoma. Three clones of Chardonnay grow in the upper reaches of the vineyard, facing north, remaining cool in the summer afternoons. These clones grow small bunches of small berries, concentrating the flavors from the scant 2 tons per acre yield. Peter and Robert, walk the vineyard selecting particular rows by look, smell, feel and taste, tempered by the experience of past vintages.

**The 2010 Vintage** was a challenge. Spring brought heavy rains. The summer was colder than usual, an affect, we believe, of global climate change, yes, colder, not hotter. The fall rains came too early for many varietals, causing mold and rot. Chardonnay escaped almost unscathed. They bloomed before the spring rain and ripened before the fall rain. The cold summer did affect the yield and sugar content, both lower than normal. Ripeness at lower sugars accounts for lower alcohol in the wine. Any mold from the cold summer was removed by our triple sorting all of the fruit. We, both grower and winemaker, were delighted with this Chardonnay harvest.

**The winemaking:** Our technique for Chardonnay has its roots in the great white Burgundies of France. We whole cluster press at low pressure, cold settle for a few days and decant into a very special selection of barrels - three year air dried, tight grained French oak barrels from a hand full of select coopers. We inoculated each of four-barrel lots with four distinct strains of yeast. We feed the yeast and keep them happy. The barrels go into the cave, warm gradually and ferment at around 65°F, Mother Nature's choice to achieve richness, depth and mouth feel.

**Élevage** means training the wine during barrel aging. No wine is trained more than Chardonnay. We coax the malo/lactic conversion along in the cool cave, never heating the barrels to force the issue, patience rewarding us with a silky texture. We then stir the lees every three weeks for months (bantonage or Sur lie) until the wine achieves the layered complexity and rich smoothness that is a result of the perfect balance of fruit, acid, glycerin, oak, and tannin.

**Tasting notes:** This is a traditional style Chardonnay, which means it is less about oak and butter and more about fruit, layered complexity and mouth feel. The appearance is brilliant straw and sunlight. The nose is Chardonnay grape with tropical notes. The flavor is broad and expansive with just the right amount of brightness to hold your interest. It's creamy without being buttery. It pairs well with Crab, chicken in a light sauce, roasted pepper Panini, or pasta with Pesto.

Picked: October 4, 2010. Brix: 23°, T.A. 6.9g/L, pH 3.48.

Barrel aged: 20 barrels - 10 months, 100% French oak, 35% new

At bottling: Alc. 13.4%, pH 3.80, T.A. 6.0g/L, R.S. 0.04%

Unfined. Cross flow filtered before bottling,

Sterile bottled, Velcorin free.

SO2 at bottling 18 ppm, at release less than 10 ppm.

Bottled 440 cases, July 2011. Released February 2012.

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