

# 2012 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 2012 Vintage** was almost perfect, a stellar vineyard, the best since 2007. The winter brought us enough rain, spring saw no frosts during the critical bud break and bloom periods, and the summer weather was just right, neither too cold or too hot. These perfect conditions produced an abundance of exceptionally flavorful and perfectly conditioned grapes. It was an easy year for the winemakers.

**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 with a bit of bentonite clay to settle the heavy lees, and carefully 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 two weeks for months (bantonage or Sur lees) until the wine achieves the layered complexity and rich smoothness. Bantonage softens the tannins and creates greater mouth feel and creaminess while retaining acid balance. We continue the process until the taste tells us we're finished.

**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 pairs well with Crab, scallops, chicken in a light sauce, roasted pepper Panini, or pasta with Pesto. It's also great by itself.

Picked: September 19, 2012. Brix: 22.7°, T.A. 5.4g/L, pH 3.75.  
Barrel aged Sur lees 10 months, 100% French oak, 40% new  
At bottling: Alc. 13.4%, pH 3.80, T.A. 6.1g/L, R.S. 0.03g/L  
Unfined. Cross flow clarified before bottling,  
Sterile bottled, Velcorin free, Vegan, Low Histamines.  
SO<sub>2</sub> at bottling 18 ppm, at release less than 12 ppm.  
Bottled 250 cases, July 2013. Released February 2014.

For more information: [robert.rex@deerfieldranch.com](mailto:robert.rex@deerfieldranch.com)  
[www.deerfieldranch.com](http://www.deerfieldranch.com)    [www.cleanwine.info](http://www.cleanwine.info)



*Taste the Passion*