

2015 Chardonnay

Los Carneros



The 2015 Vintage

This vintage will be remembered for high quality, but low yields. The 2015 growing season started out with unseasonably warm temperatures in the late winter and early spring. This resulted in an early bud break and bloom. Colder temperatures in May (during the peak of bloom) caused uneven fruit set which ultimately resulted in a much smaller crop in 2015, compared to the three abundant years that preceded it. As a result, our winemaker worked hand-in-hand with our vineyard crews and also employed new technologies, like optical sorting, to ensure we picked and crushed only the best quality grapes. The harvest was one of the earliest on record in Napa Valley, beginning on July 31st with the picking of grapes for our sparkling wine program, and concluding for us October 22nd. While ongoing drought was of great concern, we were fortunate to have received enough rain in the winter to fill our reservoirs.

Varietal Composition	100% Chardonnay
Appellation	Los Carneros
Harvest	September 2015
Technical Data	ALC: 14.3% by vol.; TA: 5.6 G/L; pH: 3.50
Cooperage	70% 9 Months in French Oak Barrels (30% New) 30% Fermented and Aged in Stainless Steel Tanks
Production	10,400 Cases

About The Vineyard

Our Chardonnay vineyards span the entire cool climate Carneros region. Temperatures are moderated by the adjoining San Pablo Bay, cool afternoon breezes, and persistent morning fog. As the hot air above California's Central Valley rises, it is replaced by cool air from the Pacific Ocean. The sun burns off this fog late in the morning which causes the temperature to immediately jump 15 degrees. This climate yields grapes that have both enough cool hang time and sunshine to develop great natural acidity and deep fruit flavor. The blend of the 2015 Carneros Chardonnay consists of 70% Estate grown fruit, and 30% from several neighboring growers who have farmed grapes for Artesa for many years.

Winemaking

The grapes were hand-harvested at night, and brought over to the winery in the early morning hours. Winemaker Ana Diogo-Draper used different types of techniques to press the grapes: the majority of the grapes were whole-cluster pressed, using a slow cycle that gently pushes the must rendering clean juice but few solids. The remaining lots were a combination of destemmed and whole cluster grapes in the same press load. The grapes were able to macerate in the press for about 2 hours, being tasted every 15 minutes, in order to extract a distinct fruit profile. 70% of the juice was fermented in French oak barrels (30% new, the remainder was fermented in seasoned barrels); the lees were stirred once a week for three months, bringing added texture and richness to the mouthfeel. 30% of the juice was fermented in stainless steel, temperature controlled tanks, at a cooler temperature (45 - 50 F). This technique allows for the retention of highly volatile aroma compounds. This combination of oak and tank fermentation imparted richness and viscosity to the wine, without overwhelming it. Likewise, our winemaker allowed just 50% of the wine to undergo malolactic fermentation, rounding out the edges, but guaranteeing that the unique brightness of the Chardonnay fruit really comes through, with a hint of oak in the back palate. The wine was blended after nine months of aging, and then filtered and bottled.

Tasting Notes

This is a bright Chardonnay, with the beautiful layers of fruit bursting in the glass – notes of honeysuckle, orange blossom, key lime and golden peach. The techniques used are designed to retain the signature Los Carneros aromas of lemon-citrus and white blossom while accentuating the minerality and vivid, fresh fruit flavors of citrus and stone fruits in the wine. Partial barrel fermentation and lees stirring create complex layers that impart hints of oak and wrap the flavors in a rich, generously textured mouthfeel and elegant finish.

ARTESA