

## The New Oregon Chardonnay

Winegrowers came to the Willamette Valley thirty years ago looking for the perfect place to grow the Burgundian varieties, Pinot noir and Chardonnay - a place where longer hours of daylight and cooler growing conditions would allow these North European varieties to ripen slowly, with a long period of flavor development at the end of the growing season. Unfortunately, most of the Chardonnay planted in Oregon in the '70s and '80s was the UC Davis Clone 108 selected for a much warmer climate that did not perform consistently here. So we started over in the mid-nineties with new "Dijon clones" imported directly from Burgundy, creating a revolution in Oregon Chardonnay.

**Stephen Tanzer's  
International Wine Cellar**

April 2008

Bethel Heights 2006 Estate  
Chardonnay

**90**

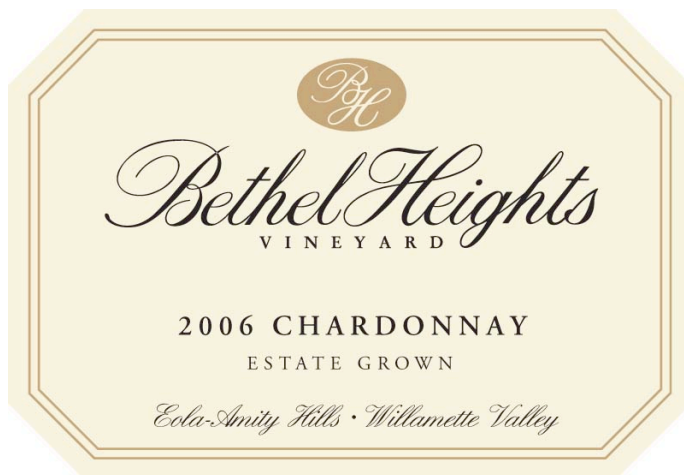
*Smoky pit fruits and poached pear on the nose, with a subtle vanilla quality mounting with air. Fresh and juicy, with pliant peach and yellow plum flavors given lift by dusty minerality. Finishes on a smoky note, with a gentle hint of iodine and excellent persistence."*

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*"Oregon's Chardonnays are showing character as they never did before... Chardonnay that's on a par with the region's much heralded Pinot Noirs... gently perfumed, well-structured, mineral-tinged wines with high-toned fruit... Like Meursault, the fruit is rich without being cloying, redolent of fresh apples and pears, and bears a pleasing hint of nuttiness."*

Patrick Comiskey  
Wine Review Online

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2006 CHARDONNAY • ESTATE GROWN

*Certified Sustainably Grown*

66% Dijon Clone, 34% Old Vine Wente Clone

Date picked: October 7, 2006

Grapes at harvest: Brix: 24.3, pH: 3.3, TA: 6.8, gr/Liter

Finished wine: Alcohol 14.2%, pH: 3.49, TA: 5.4, gr/Liter

1062 cases produced, bottled September, 2007

Suggested retail \$25

**Chardonnay Clones at Bethel Heights:** In 1994 we started planting new Dijon clones of Chardonnay at Bethel Heights, but left intact our original three acres of Wente Clone Chardonnay planted at Bethel Heights in 1977. Over the years we have come to respect what this old Wente clone contributes to our wine - a structure of bright acidity to balance the ripe richness of the Dijon clones. This has turned out to be especially important in the recent run of record-breaking warm vintages, when the early ripening Dijon clones sometimes have trouble holding on to their acidity.

**The 2006 Vintage:** 2006 was warmer than any previous Oregon vintage except 2003. The difference in 2006 was that all the heat came in early to mid-summer, rather than at the end of the season, so the grapes ripened in relatively cool conditions and therefore have more expressive fruit and more freshness than one might expect from a hot vintage.

**Vinification:** The fruit was whole-cluster pressed, barrel fermented in French oak (20% new barrels), aged on the lees with complete malolactic fermentation, stirred every two weeks, and bottled after eleven months in barrel.

**Tasting Notes:** Aromas of cinnamon, clove, anise, and oak spice. Lush Anjou pear and Golden apples are balanced by a deep minerality and persistent acidity. This vivacious wine has the structure to age, but enough forward fruit to be enjoyed in its youth.