

CHARDONNAY AT BETHEL HEIGHTS

Chardonnay presents the perfect opportunity to experience *terroir* through a lens other than Pinot noir. Our Estate Chardonnay and our Estate Pinot Noir are the two most transparent expressions of Bethel Heights *terroir* in our portfolio.

The sixteen acres of Chardonnay in our Estate vineyards include 3 acres of the old Wente selection, planted on its own roots in 1977. More recent plantings include several different "Dijon clone" selections planted in 1994, 1999 and 2008.

THE 2012 VINTAGE

In the Willamette Valley, 2012 provided us with a dramatic contrast to 2010 and 2011, when we were firmly in the grip of unusually cool climatic conditions. Although 2012 began slowly, with a late bud-break and a cool spring, by late June the momentum shifted, and for the rest of the season we enjoyed endless sunny days with warm temperatures and perfect ripening conditions.

**SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE, Jon Bonné
December 5, 2014**

2012 Bethel Heights Chardonnay - "One of Oregon's best Chardonnay examples..."

"A property better known for its Pinot, but cousins Ben and Mimi Casteel have also put forward one of Oregon's best Chardonnay examples, from plantings that include own-rooted Wente clones dating to 1977. Fermented in mostly old oak, it's graceful and tangy, and shows a terrific breadth: lime peel, quince, casaba melon, wet stones, plus a classic juiciness."

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2012 ESTATE CHARDONNAY

Certified Sustainably Grown

62% Dijon Clone, 38% Old Vine Wente Clone

Dates picked: October 2 - 13, 2012

Grapes at harvest: Brix 22.7, pH 3.06, TA 8 gr/Liter

Finished wine: Alcohol 13.5%, pH 3.24, TA 6.2 gr/Liter

Fermented and aged in French oak, 10% new wood

Bottled unfiltered, on September 19, 2013

Cases produced: 1575 cases 750 ml; 213 cases 375 ml

Suggested retail \$28

VINIFICATION: The fruit was whole-cluster pressed, barrel fermented in neutral 500L oak puncheons, traditional 228 L barrels, and one 3000L foudre (a big oval shaped oak tank). The new wine was aged on the lees with complete malolactic fermentation, and bottled after eleven months in barrel.

TASTING NOTES: Aromas of honeydew melon, white peach, and lemon verbena with hints of star anise, nutmeg, and white pepper. The palate features flavors of banana and lemon zest with a hint of mid-palate salinity, and bright acidity that carries the wine to a long, graceful finish.

90 WINE & SPIRITS

The aroma on this wine brings to mind warm apples in the sun, the fragrance touched by oak and finely integrated on the palate. The salinity of its texture gives it energy, grip and precision, with enough detail to merit pairing with *coq au vin blanc*.