

CHARDONNAY AT BETHEL HEIGHTS

Chardonnay has been the preeminent white wine at Bethel Heights since the first vines were planted here in 1977. Today we have six different blocks of Chardonnay planted on various benches and slopes around our Estate vineyards.

THE 2016 VINTAGE

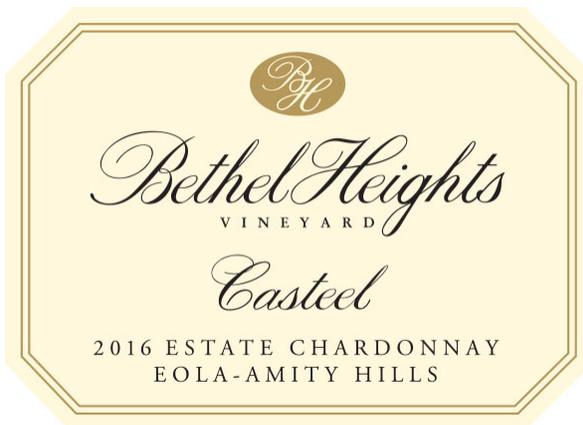
2016 was the earliest vintage we have ever seen at Bethel Heights since our first harvest thirty-five years ago. Our vineyard was almost a month ahead of “normal” at every turning point in the growing season. And yet, the wines of 2016 are not the uniformly opulent offerings one would expect from a year defined by precociousness. Ripeness came early, but not at the expense of purity and elegance, especially in our older, own rooted plantings that make up half of our estate vineyard.

95 WINE ADVOCATE

The 2016 Chardonnay Casteel opens with intense mineral notions on the nose, aromas of pulverized stone and petrichor over lemon meringue, Red Delicious apples, hazelnuts, honey toast and clotted cream. Medium-bodied with a light creamy texture, it has beautiful white flowers in the mouth with honey nut and apple pie nuances and a streak of crushed rock running with the very bright acidity, finishing very, very long and honeyed.

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Very complex and sophisticated, flinty, reductive notes that play into fresh and vibrant, yellow citrus fruit. The palate has a very assertive, long and detailed core of fresh citrus flavors and a wealth of mouthwatering acidity driving the long finish. Exciting chardonnay.



2016 CHARDONNAY • CASTEEL

LIVE *Certified Sustainable*

Date picked: September 18, 2016

Grapes at harvest: Brix 21, pH 3.2, TA 7.1 gr/Liter

Finished wine: Alcohol 12.9%, pH: 3.32, TA: 5.8 gr/Liter

Barrel aged 15 months in French oak, 55% new barrels

210 Cases produced (420 6-pack cases)

Bottled unfinned January 16, 2018

THE CASTEEL CHARDONNAY

Our family name on this reserve Chardonnay is our license to choose our personal favorite lots from the vintage and give them the luxury of a long slow fermentation in barrique. In 2016 we reserved 6 barrels plus a puncheon from our oldest Chardonnay vines, the Wente selection planted in 1977, plus two barrels from Justice Vineyard, Dijon clone 76, planted in 1999. It is a unique blend in the history of our Casteel Chardonnay, yielding a wine of purity and freshness with outstanding structure and concentration.

VINIFICATION: The fruit was whole-cluster pressed and barrel fermented in 228 L oak barrels and one 500 L oak puncheon. The wine was aged on the lees with complete malolactic fermentation, and bottled after 15 months in barrel.

WINEMAKER NOTES: Our 2016 Casteel Chardonnay opens with aromas of preserved lemon, brioche, white pepper and ocean air. The palate is both graceful and energetic, displaying the tension of a wine that will age gracefully over the next 8 to 10 years.