

2003 CHARDONNAY ESTATE



**100% Napa Valley, Chardonnay, Estate Grown
Harvested at 25.3 Brix on September 15-16,
2003**

14.2% Alcohol

0.59 TA/3.45 pH

Cases Produced: 95 Cases

September 2004

We are pleased to present the new 2003 Chardonnay Estate made from vines located on our "front block" property in the Oak Knoll section of Napa Valley. We hand selected these grapes to create this native yeast fermented Chardonnay with characteristics of rich apple and pear. The vines yielded an average of 1.9 tons per acre allowing us to produce only 95 cases.

HARVEST NOTES: The general consensus among Napa Valley vintners and growers is that the 2003 growing season is one they will not soon forget. The unpredictable nature of the 2003 growing season began with a couple of early heat spikes in March, followed by the wettest April on record. Late heat spikes contributed to lower overall yields, but produced a vintage with high quality, great color concentration and intensity of flavors.

WINEMAKING NOTES: Careful pressing of whole clusters minimized skin contact. This gentle process helps the wine achieve balance as well as develop a silky mouth-feel and enhances the aging potential. Using native yeasts, the wine fermented in French oak barrels, with none of the wine undergoing a second, malolactic fermentation to preserve the natural acidity. Tonnelleries: François Frères and Damy. Oak types: Allier, and Tronçais. The wine spent 10 months on the lees in French oak followed bottling on August 16, 2004.

TASTING NOTES: The nose opens with intense tropical fruit, toast and mineral aromas. Rich fruit flavors, especially of apple and pear enhance the lush palate. French oak provides a touch of spice with hints of clove, cinnamon and nutmeg. A bright apple-like crispness balances these silky, toasty layers. Drinkability: 2004 to 2013

VINEYARD NOTES: This Chardonnay was grown exclusively on our estate vineyard located on the Silverado Trail in the Oak Knoll area. This shallow, rocky hillside vineyard originally planted in 1980 stressed the vines sufficiently during the growing season to ensure intense varietal character. We employed a variety of techniques in managing each vineyard's microclimate including vertical trellising, leaf removal and crop reduction.

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