



2014 Chardonnay, Santa Maria Cuvée

Appellation: Santa Maria Valley

Varietal: 100% Chardonnay

Alcohol: 13.7

pH: 3.15

T.A.: 0.65 g / 100 ml

Bottling Date: March 31, 2015

Cases Produced: 1065

Suggested Retail Price: \$30

Produced and Bottled by:

Kenneth Volk Vineyards

5230 Tepusquet Road Santa Maria, CA 93454

805.938.7896

In the Vineyard

The Santa Maria Valley of northern Santa Barbara County has a well-deserved reputation for cool climate viticulture. Our Santa Maria Cuvée is 100% Chardonnay, a blend of the following vineyards: 27% UCD Clone 8 from Cottonwood Canyon Vineyard, 24% Robert Young Clone 17 from Bien Nacido Vineyard, 25% Wente Selection from the Kenneth Volk Estate Vineyard, and 24% Robert Young Clone 17 from Sierra Madre Vineyards. Even in the typically cool Santa Maria Valley, 2014 was a relatively warm growing season. The lack of winter rainfall, and the prior three years of drought, forced an early bud break in early February. Bloom occurred under favorable conditions, but the set clusters were small in size. Harvest started in the second week of September.

In The Cellar

The fruit was handpicked and field-sorted prior to delivery to the winery. Once at the winery, grapes were whole cluster pressed and transferred to tall narrow-jacketed stainless steel tanks for 48-72 hours of cold settling at 38 degrees. The cold juice was then transferred to cooperage in our climate controlled white fermentation room where we utilize an OXO barrel rack system. Barrels are on stationary racks, but each barrel rests on four roller wheels that can be rotated 360 degrees. A blend of French and Hungarian cooperage was used in fermentation: 1/3 new oak, 1/3 1-2 year old, and 1/3 3-5 year old barrels.

Seven different strains of yeast were used in fermentation in order to build texture, aromatics and complexity in the wine. As fermentation completed, barrels were topped in place and the bungs hammered home. Once fermentation solids settled, barrels were gingerly rolled in place to keep yeast cells in suspension. This form of lees stirring allows for adequate circulation without having to remove the bung and expose the wine to oxygen or airborne microflora. After many blending trials, a stainless steel tank component (5.3%) from Cottonwood Canyon Vineyard was added. This stainless fraction helped increase the acidity of the final blend and lends a Carmen Miranda fruit hat to the cuvée.

In The Glass

Our 2014 Santa Maria Cuvée Chardonnay displays aromas of toasted oak and cereal grains initially, followed by more subtle aromatics of white peach and nectarine. On the palate, there are more tropical fruit flavors. Pineapple and banana are creamy without being overly buttery. A beautiful balance of acidity, alcohol and texture blend to make this a delicious, easily-enjoyed wine. Consider pairing with sautéed scallops, roast sea bass, bouillabaisse and other white fish stews.