



## WINEMAKER'S NOTES

The summer of 2009 gave us a moderately cool weather in the Sta. Rita Hills. Our Chardonnay was able to ripen slowly, developing the elegant, tropical fruit essence that characterizes the wines from our little corner of the Santa Ynez river valley. Nearing harvest, the fruit still had ample acidity. So our decision to pick the crop was based on two weeks of tasting “technically ripe” grapes. In other words, the sugar content in degrees Brix, the titratable acidity and Ph all told us the grapes were statistically ripe. But we wanted to optimize what nature was giving us, so we just went through the vineyard every day, tasting fifty or sixty berries from various parts of the vineyard until we felt the flavors were just right.

To retain the character of the chardonnay grape, we fermented this wine in neutral oak barrels. It was bottled in May of 2011, and so it spent 18 months barrel aging, as well. We used our François Frères barrels from the 2006 and 2007 seasons.

Tropical fruit with elements of Meyer lemon, white peaches, and pineapple come forth in the nose of this very elegant 2009 Chardonnay. In the mouth, these flavors are evident, along with a bright acidity and the unctuous texture that is present in all of our chardonnays. The acidity should enable this wine to age well for 10 or more years, rounding out the complex fruitiness to an elegant finish.

We like this wine with fried calamari. The acidity cuts through whatever oils are used in cooking, and the lemon and tropical fruit flavors complement the delicate, white meat of the squid.

Sláinte!

Kristi Marks, Winemaker

Sweeney Canyon

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