

Cakebread Cellars



2013 Chardonnay Napa Valley

Vineyards

Our Napa Valley Chardonnay blends grapes from top vineyards throughout the valley, with the preponderance coming from the cool-climate Carneros region at its southern tip. Subject to fog and cool breezes from nearby San Pablo Bay, Carneros enjoys a long growing season that ripens its fruit fully while retaining the bright acidity that gives our chardonnay its freshness and vitality. We complement this fruit with grapes from warmer vineyards north of Carneros that yield riper, fuller chardonnays. This allows us to craft a complex, elegantly structured wine that drinks beautifully on release, but ages well in bottle.

Vintage 2013

In 2013, a warm, dry spring initiated early budbreak, ensured trouble-free vine flowering and grape set, and led to a consistently mild summer fostering steady, even ripening and grapes with wonderful flavor concentration. The fruit for our 2013 Napa Valley Chardonnay was harvested between August 20th and September 20th with an ideal balance of sugars and acidity.

Winemaking

Our strategy for making world-class chardonnay begins with night harvesting, which ensures our grapes are picked cold and retain their fruit purity and bright natural acidity. Once at the winery, the fruit is whole-cluster-pressed, further preserving freshness and purity, and the juice is transferred to a mix of French oak barrels and stainless steel tanks for fermentation. In 2013, 90% of the juice was fermented in barrel, while 10% became wine in tank. After primary fermentation completed, 18% of the wine was put through a secondary, malolactic fermentation to enhance richness and mouthfeel. The barrel-fermented portion of the wine aged *sur lie* (on the yeast lees) in 20% new French oak barrels for eight months, with periodic stirring of the lees, to add an appealingly creamy, yeasty tone to the wine's crisp, vibrant fruit.

Tasting Notes

Our 2013 Napa Valley Chardonnay boasts fresh, fragrant, apple, melon and pear aromas with a hint of oak spice. Rich and mouthfilling on the palate, its smooth, beautifully balanced, yellow apple, nectarine and honeydew melon flavors segue into a long, succulent finish enhanced by refreshing mineral and spicy oak tones. Released soon after bottling, our Napa Valley Chardonnay hits its stride after 6-8 months in the bottle and rewards 5-7 years of aging.

Grape variety: 100% chardonnay

Vineyards: Napa Valley

Harvest dates: August 20 – September 20, 2013

Fermentation: 90% barrel, 10% tank, 18% malolactic

Barrel aging: 8 months *sur lie* in French oak barrels, 20% new, with periodic stirring of the lees

Alcohol: 14.3%

Total acidity: 0.69 g/100ml

pH: 3.33

Bottled: June, 2014

Winemaker: Julianne Laks