

Cakebread Cellars



2012 Chardonnay Reserve Carneros, Napa Valley

Vineyards

We craft our Chardonnay Reserve exclusively from grapes grown in our four estate vineyards in the cool-climate Carneros district of southern Napa Valley. These sites provide ideal conditions for the cultivation of world-class chardonnay fruit, especially as they're planted to nine distinctive clones of the variety, each supplying desirable traits to our final blend. By fermenting and barrel aging each clonal selection separately – using French oak barrels tailored to the character of each lot – and then blending only the very best lots, we're able to create a rich, luxurious chardonnay boasting layers of complex aromas and flavors.

Vintage 2012

2012 was a near-ideal growing season, with a warm, dry spring fostering early budbreak and trouble-free flowering and grape set. Consistently mild summer weather free of rain or unwelcome heat spikes allowed us to harvest our Chardonnay Reserve grapes at just the right moment with a perfect balance of intense, concentrated fruit flavors and bright acidity.

Winemaking

We night-harvested and whole-cluster-pressed our 2012 Chardonnay Reserve fruit to maximize freshness and fruit purity, then instigated fermentation by inoculating the juice with cultured yeast strains that accentuate the chardonnay variety's bright fruit tones. One hundred percent of the juice fermented in French oak barrels, 30% new, and 60% of the wine was put through a secondary, malolactic fermentation to enhance its texture and foster a rich, creamy mouthfeel. The Chardonnay Reserve aged in barrel on its primary yeast lees for 15 months, with weekly stirring of the lees. This regimen enhanced the wine's aromatic complexity, round, creamy texture and fresh, lush flavors.

Tasting Notes

Our 2012 Chardonnay Reserve boasts bright, creamy aromas of sweet golden apple and white peach augmented by enticing pie crust, biscotti, toasted oak and mineral scents. Full-bodied and mouthfilling on the palate, with luscious, impressively concentrated apple, pear and melon flavors, the wine delivers a strikingly long, persistent finish showcasing ripe fruit, spicy oak and refreshing mineral tones. Although this intense, beautifully structured chardonnay is difficult to resist now, it will benefit from another 5-7 years of aging.

Grape variety: 100% chardonnay

Vineyards: 100% estate Carneros, Napa Valley

Harvest dates: September 5-25, 2012

Fermentation: 100% in French oak barrels

Barrel aging: 15 months *sur lie* in French oak barrels, 30% new, with weekly stirring of the yeast lees

Alcohol: 14.5%

Total acidity: 0.67 g/100 ml

pH: 3.44

Bottled: January, 2014

Winemaker: Julianne Laks