

Cakebread Cellars



2014 Chardonnay Napa Valley

Vineyards

Our Napa Valley Chardonnay comes primarily (91% in 2014) from grapes grown in the cool-climate Carneros district at the southern tip of the valley. Subject to fog and cooling breezes from nearby San Pablo Bay, Carneros enjoys a long growing season that ripens its fruit fully while retaining the bright acidity that gives Cakebread Cellars Chardonnay its freshness and vitality. We complement our Carneros fruit with grapes from warmer sites in the valley that yield riper, fuller chardonnays. This allows us to craft a rich, yet elegant and complex chardonnay that drinks beautifully on release, but ages gracefully in the bottle.

Vintage 2014

The latest in a series of excellent vintages in California, 2014 featured a warm, dry spring that initiated early budbreak, ensured trouble-free flowering and grape set, and led to a consistently mild summer, with few heat spikes. These conditions fostered steady, even ripening of our chardonnay grapes, which were harvested with concentrated flavors balanced by vibrant acidity between August 25th and September 15th.

Winemaking

100% of the fruit was hand-harvested at night to ensure the grapes retained their purity of flavor and bright natural acidity. The fruit was then whole-cluster-pressed to further preserve freshness and varietal intensity, with the free-run juice transferred to a mix of French oak barrels (96%) and stainless steel tanks (4%) for fermentation. After primary fermentation completed, 31% of the wine was put through a secondary, malolactic fermentation to enrich its flavors and texture. The barrel-fermented portion of the wine aged *sur lie* (on the yeast lees) in 28% new French oak barrels for eight months, with bi-weekly stirring of the lees to layer the wine's crisp, vibrant fruit with an appealingly creamy, slightly yeasty tone.

Tasting Notes

One of the richer, weightier chardonnays we've made in recent years, our 2014 vintage is redolent of creamy golden apple, Asian pear and honeydew melon with complementary coconut and sweet oak scents. Fresh and lively on the palate, with rich citrus, apple, melon and tropical fruit flavors, it culminates in a long finish featuring pleasing mineral and spice tones.

Grape variety: 100% chardonnay

Vineyards: Napa Valley, 91% Carneros district

Harvest dates: August 25th – September 15th, 2014

Fermentation: 96% barrel, 4% tank, 31% malolactic

Barrel aging: 8 months *sur lie* in French oak barrels, 28% new, with bi-weekly stirring of the lees

Alcohol: 14.3%

Total acidity: 0.65 g/100ml

pH: 3.43

Bottled: June, 2015

Winemaker: Julianne Laks