

Cakebread Cellars



2015 Chardonnay Napa Valley

Vineyards

In 2015, 90% of the grapes for our Napa Valley Chardonnay came from the cool-climate Carneros district at the southern tip of the valley, with 40% of the fruit from our estate Carneros vineyards. Carneros enjoys a long, cool growing season that fully ripens its fruit while retaining the bright acidity that gives our Napa Valley Chardonnay its freshness and vitality. We complemented our Carneros fruit in 2015 with chardonnay grapes from just north of the city of Napa that yield especially luscious wines. This helped us craft a sumptuous, yet elegant and complex chardonnay that drinks beautifully young, but also ages gracefully in bottle.

Vintage 2015

After abundant harvests from 2012 through 2014, the 2015 vintage produced a notably lighter crop. A warm, dry winter fostered early bud-break, and consistently mild summer weather, with a few late-season heat spikes, led to our earliest harvest ever. (Since Cakebread Cellars has been around since 1973, that's saying something.) The light crop yielded small chardonnay berries and clusters boasting bright, intense varietal flavors. We harvested the fruit between August 13th and September 4th with an ideal balance of sugars and acidity.

Winemaking

100% of the grapes were hand-harvested at night to maximize freshness and varietal intensity. The fruit was then whole-cluster-pressed, with the free-run juice transferred to French oak barrels for fermentation. After primary fermentation completed, 29% 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 35% new French oak barrels for eight months, with periodic stirring of the lees to layer the wine's crisp, vibrant fruit flavors with an appealingly creamy, slightly yeasty tone.

Tasting Notes

One sniff and sip of our 2015 Napa Valley Chardonnay is all that's required to recognize the exceptional quality of this fine wine. The nose offers vivid, creamy aromas of green and golden apple, pear and citrus with supporting scents of beeswax and mineral. Full-bodied and vibrant on the palate, with bright, intense, apple, citrus and melon flavors, our 2015 Napa Valley Chardonnay is remarkably persistent on the palate, culminating in a long finish showcasing pleasing spice, yeast and mineral tones. Released soon after bottling, it will hit its stride after 6-8 months and reward 5-7 years' aging.

Grape variety: 100% chardonnay

Vineyards: 90% Carneros district, 10% Napa Valley

Harvest dates: August 13th – September 4th, 2015

Fermentation: 100% barrel, 29% malolactic

Barrel aging: 8 months *sur lie* in French oak barrels, 35% new, with periodic stirring of the lees

Alcohol: 14.1%

Total acidity: 0.72 g/100ml

pH: 3.36

Bottled: June, 2016

Winemaker: Julianne Laks