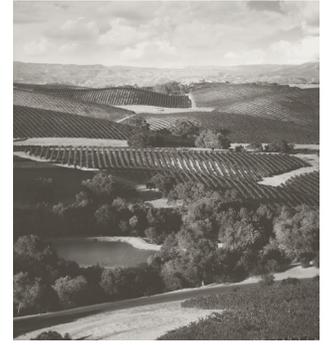




ARTESA
VINEYARDS & WINERY

2014
CHARDONNAY

Carneros



varietal: 100% CHARDONNAY

appellation: CARNEROS

harvest: SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2014

technical data: ALC. 14.3% BY VOL; RS: 0.8 G/L TA: 5.9 G/L; PH: 3.50

cooperage: 70% AGED 9 MONTHS IN FRENCH OAK BARRELS (30% NEW FRENCH OAK);
30% AGED IN STAINLESS STEEL

THE 2014 VINTAGE

In the beginning of our growing season, the drought was a main concern. The 2013/2014 winter was one of the driest on record in California and rainfall totals in the Napa Valley were approximately half of normal. However, the timing of the late rains through February and April let our vineyard team relax a little as the vines received a much needed drink of water as they were emerging from dormancy and about to begin bud break. This rainfall recharged our soil and provided enough water to fill the reservoirs. Furthermore, the spring was warm allowing us to save water if needed for irrigation rather than using it for frost protection. As summer began, our vineyards already had full canopies and full clusters. Veraison, when the skins of the grapes change color, typically occurs in late July; but this year we saw the changing color occur much sooner. The vines used for high-quality wine production generally don't need much water, and a benefit of the drought is that berry sizes are typically smaller and have more concentrated flavors, which our winemaker believes contributes to the overall quality of this year's harvest.

ABOUT THE VINEYARD

Our Chardonnay vineyards span the entire cool climate Carneros region. Temperatures are moderated by the adjoining San Pablo Bay, cool afternoon breezes, and persistent morning fog. As the hot air above California's Central Valley rises, it is replaced by cool air from the Pacific Ocean. The sun burns off this fog late in the morning which causes the temperature to immediately jump 15 degrees. This climate yields grapes that have both enough cool hang time and sunshine to develop great natural acidity and deep fruit flavor. The blend consists of 80% Estate grown fruit and 20% from several neighboring growers who have farmed grapes for Artesa for many years.

WINEMAKING

After the grapes were hand harvested, winemaker Ana Diogo-Draper used whole-cluster pressing with the majority of the grapes (a technique which bypasses crushing) using a slow "champagne" cycle that gently pushes the must rendering clean juice but few solids. 70% of the juice was fermented in French oak barrels (30% new, the remainder was fermented in seasoned barrels); the lees were stirred twice a week for five months, bringing added texture and richness to the mouthfeel. 30% of the juice was fermented in stainless steel, temperature controlled tanks, at a cooler temperature (45 - 50 F). This technique allows for the retention of highly volatile aroma compounds. This combination of oak and tank fermentation imparted richness and viscosity to the wine, without overwhelming it. Likewise, Ana allowed just 50% of the wine to undergo malolactic fermentation, rounding out the edges with a hint of butter that never goes over the top. The wine was bottled after nine months of aging.

TASTING NOTES

Our Carneros Chardonnay is first and foremost about aromatics, and the techniques used are designed to retain the signature Carneros aromas of lemon-citrus and white blossom while accentuating the minerality and vivid, fresh fruit flavors of citrus and stone fruits in the wine. Partial barrel fermentation, malolactic and lees stirring create complex layers, imparting hints of oak and wrapping the flavors in a rich, generously textured mouthfeel and elegant finish.