

2007 RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY CHARDONNAY



“Winemaking and filmmaking are two great art forms that are very important in the development of California. They both start with raw ingredients—in the case of wine, the land and the grapes, and in the case of film, the script and the actors’ performances. The winemaker takes these raw materials and ferments and blends. He says yes to the batch, no to that one. The director does the same thing: a series of yeses and nos, from casting and costuming to edits and sound mixes. In both cases you have to start with top notch raw materials—whether it’s the land or a script.”- Francis Ford Coppola

FILMMAKING AND WINEMAKING INTERSECT IN SONOMA

When Francis Coppola chose Sonoma County as the home for his new winery, he did so because of the area’s beauty and winemaking potential. By selecting Sonoma, Francis provided winemaker Corey Beck, a Sonoma native, the opportunity to make wines with grapes grown in his own proverbial backyard. Director’s Cut wines are the result—appellation-designated wines from Sonoma’s diverse and distinctive appellations.

RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY

The Russian River Valley climate is shaped by a regular intrusion of cooling fog from the Pacific Ocean a few miles to the west. Much like the tide, the fog ebbs and flows, arriving in the evening, cooling the area down from its daytime high temperature by as much as 35 to 40 degrees, and retreating the following morning. This natural air conditioning allows Chardonnay grapes to develop full flavor maturity over an extended growing season—often 15 to 20 percent longer than neighboring areas—while retaining their all-important natural acidity. We source our Chardonnay grapes from a mixture of well-drained soils, including sandy loam, clay, and alluvial gravel. All tend to yield low crops levels, but each imparts unique characteristics, which when blended together create wines with tremendous richness and complexity.

VINTAGE PROFILE

The 2007 vintage was a winemaker’s dream, and, quite possibly, the vintage of a lifetime. The winter season, which provided very little rain, folded into a dry, warm spring. The lack of precipitation significantly reduced the crop size and led to smaller than normal grapes. Conditions such as these typically indicate very concentrated, high-quality grapes—and were they ever! Summer progressed slowly because there were none of the usual heat waves, thereby leading to an extended growing season. When harvest began in the fall, we were given the luxury to pick small lots at a time, only when the fruit was perfectly ripe and demonstrating full phenolic development. Even as we picked fruit, we were astounded at how profusely aromatic and pronounced the flavors were. And throughout the wine’s development, even more impressed with what nature had helped us achieve.

WINEMAKER’S NOTES

We crush our Russian River Chardonnay whole-cluster and then ferment entirely in French oak barrels to achieve a silky, seductive texture. This vintage offers profuse aromatics of honeysuckle, baked pineapple, exotic spices and vanilla crème, as well as tightly focused flavors of pear, green apple, lemon and passion fruit, all beautifully layered upon a full-bodied palate. 12 months in 50% new French oak, 50%1-2 year old oak; 100% Chardonnay; 14.3% alcohol.

