

CHATEAU MONTELENA

Chateau Montelena's 19th century stone structure stands as a quality icon in Napa Valley, consistently producing some of the finest wines in California.



Napa Valley Chardonnay 2020

Napa Valley, California

ESTATE

Chateau Montelena's history is one of the deepest and most storied in the Napa Valley and California. Founded just north of Calistoga in 1882, it was one of the largest wineries in the state. Prohibition put an end to Montelena's winemaking, and the next major era began in 1968, when Jim Barrett purchased the estate. Jim fell in love with this exceptional property, blessed with a complex mix of soils, slopes and biodiversity of wildlife and fauna. He had a dream of creating wine at the level of the great First Growths of Bordeaux, and set about replanting the vineyard, outfitting the winery with modern equipment, and studying the processes necessary for farming and winemaking at the highest quality level.

WINE

Montelena has never changed in its philosophy of bringing the sunshine of California in a style that is structured, balanced and age worthy. In 1976, in what is now memorialized as "The Judgment of Paris," Chateau Montelena Napa Valley Chardonnay was the top-ranking wine against four white Burgundies and five other California Chardonnays in a blind tasting with a who's-who of the French food and wine industry judging. The rest, as they say, is history.

VINEYARD

Soils: Sourced from vineyards located in the south-central Napa Valley appellation, near the base of Mt. Veeder and Dry Creek Valley Road. The vineyard site, developed from old ocean terraces and alluvial fans, contains a lot of sedimentary material that gives moderate drainage and slight acidity.

Farming: Chateau Montelena is committed to sustainable farming and produces wine in their solar powered winery.

WINEMAKING

Grape Varieties: 100% Chardonnay

Fermentation: Temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks to allow the wines to ferment slowly and evenly.

Aging: 10 months in French oak barrels. Bottled August 2021.

Alcohol: 13.8% ABV

VINTAGE

The warm, dry spring was punctuated by two inches of rain in May, spurring vine growth heading into summer. There was plenty of heat and sunshine during June and July as ripening accelerated ahead of schedule. The lighter than expected crop pushed ripening further ahead as all of the Chardonnay vineyards began to move together, like a tidal wave. The wave broke on August 22. After seven intense days, the entire Chardonnay crop was harvested successfully.

TASTING NOTES

"The wine opens with green apple, honeysuckle and orange blossom... The parade of citrus marches on, although the midpalate turns more tropical with starfruit and pineapple. And while there's still plenty of green apple, the texture and juiciness of Asian pear adds complexity and depth... The acid is still mouthwatering [...]the overall length of this Chardonnay is impressive." -Winemaker Matt Crafton, 8/22