



SOURCE:
Napa Valley

VARIETAL COMPOSITION:
100% Chardonnay

VINIFICATION:
Fermented and aged in 25% stainless steel, 25% new oak and 50% neutral oak barrels for 8 months

ANALYSIS:
Alc. 14.2%



Stags' Leap

2017 NAPA VALLEY CHARDONNAY

Established in 1893, Stags' Leap Winery is one of the oldest wine estates within the acclaimed Stags Leap District, producing wines expressive of its unique terroir. With an enduring winemaking philosophy that honors traditional techniques while embracing modern capabilities, and by using the finest grapes from our own 80-acre vineyard and from quality-focused growers, Stags' Leap wines embody a natural balance, exhibiting both intensity and finesse, while bringing forth the inherent qualities of each variety.

VINTAGE:

Overall, 2017 proved to be a very memorable vintage with slightly smaller yields but exceptional quality. After much needed rainfall in the winter months ended the drought, a brief period of warmer than usual temperatures occurred during Labor Day weekend which accelerated the harvest in some areas but was perfect for ripening the fruit in the Napa Valley. Temperatures subsided just when we needed, and the fruit was allowed to mature and ripen perfectly on the vines before harvest officially began in mid-August. 2017 will be remembered as an intense and unpredictable harvest but one of tremendous quality, with wines showing great flavor intensity, perfect ripening and maturity, lovely balance and complexity, especially for varieties like Chardonnay.

VINEYARDS:

The grapes for our Napa Valley Chardonnay were sourced from the cooler southern appellations within Napa Valley, where fog from the San Pablo Bay helps to cool the vineyards throughout the growing season, allowing for ideal preservation of freshness and acidity. The fruit comes from the Carneros AVA which provides citrus, mineral, and crisp apple notes. These vineyards consistently produce Chardonnay that is ideal for our style of winemaking with fresh fruit flavors, bright acidity and vibrancy.

WINEMAKING:

Our Napa Valley Chardonnay is gently whole-cluster pressed, in order to preserve the fresh, floral aromatics naturally occurring in the fruit. Twenty-five percent of the wine is fermented in stainless steel and remains in tank until the final blend is assembled. The winemaking hand remains light, with twenty-five percent of the wine fermented and aged in new French oak barrels and the remaining fifty percent in seasoned French oak. This specific barrel treatment helps preserve the essential purity of the fruit while adding subtle notes of oak complexity. The 2017 vintage, as usual, did not undergo malolactic fermentation, which helps to further maintain the fruit's natural acidity and aromatic freshness. The wine was bottled after just six months of maturation with a weekly battonage, putting the yeast lees in suspension in order to release subtle aromatics, increase the mouthfeel, and prevent reductive qualities.

TASTING NOTES:

The inviting bouquet expresses aromas of delicate orange blossom, citrus fruits, fresh white peach and subtle hints of sandalwood and cedar (a nod to the well-integrated French Oak) which fill the glass and pique your interest in this crisp Chardonnay. On the palate, you'll find a refreshingly vibrant Chardonnay with layers of lemon citrus, passion fruit, guava and gooseberry, while also maintaining an elegant roundness in texture that is balanced (hinting at the delicate battonage lees stirring that occurs during the winemaking process). With well-integrated vanilla and caramel oak notes and a flinty minerality on the finish, this wine is full, rich and bright, yet generous in style and maintains freshness due to its acidity, which creates a Chardonnay of lovely complexity and depth.