

ABEJA



2010 CHARDONNAY

VARIETAL COMPOSITION: 100% Chardonnay
VINEYARD SOURCES: Mill Creek Vineyard & Conner Lee Vineyard
APPELLATION: Washington State
HARVEST DATES: September 29, 2010 – October 5, 2010
OAK COMPOSITION: 100% French; 40% new, 60% one-year-old
BARREL FERMENTATION: 100%
MALOLACTIC FERMENTATION: 100%
BARREL AGING: 7 months
CHEMISTRY: Alc. 14.1%, pH 3.48, TA .58 g/100ml
BOTTLING DATE: May 17, 2011
RELEASE DATE: October 1, 2011

The 2010 vintage was very challenging. It wasn't the coolest summer on record, but it was the coolest I have experienced in 20 vintages of making wine in Washington State. Having an exceptionally cold vintage was one thing, but adding to the challenge was an extended period of rain in September that provided ample conditions for mildew and rot in some vineyards. The higher acidity style of our Chardonnay relies on cooler growing sites, but the 2010 vintage was cool enough, with enough moisture at the wrong time of the growing season, that we weren't able to harvest Celilo, one of our key Chardonnay sources. The good news was that our own estate fruit and that of Conner Lee Vineyard, our other primary source for Chardonnay, were both picked at flavor maturity with no mildew or rot implications.

This vintage of Chardonnay offers the elegant, balanced style for which our Chardonnay is known. Pears, star fruit, kiwi, and vanilla combine with moderate, integrated oak flavors, beautiful complexity, and pleasant acidity. Production of this wine is just half of our usual case quantity.

We have had some delicious Cajun staff lunches during harvest, thanks to Innkeeper Mary Besbris, which along with these autumn days, have me thinking about soups and alligator - maybe an odd combination. The potatoes are fresh and delicious right now. We dig them straight from the garden, and make a simple potato-based garden soup. Alligator (if you can find it) is also nicely suited for Chardonnay. You can prepare it many ways and one that comes to mind is picatta - fried, with tomatoes and capers. We haven't tried it in soup yet, but I'm pretty sure winter and an alligator stew are both in our future.

Given our harvest lunch scene, it follows that we have been listening to Cajun and Zydeco. Clifton Chenier, Wayne Toups, and Doug Kershaw are all musicians that we have enjoyed.

John Abbott – *Winemaker*