

RIDGE

VINEYARDS

Monte Bello

Monte Bello Tasting

(\$20 for Non-Members, \$10 for Members)

2006 Monte Bello Chardonnay, \$60

Grapes were whole-cluster pressed, and the juice racked to barrel. Natural primary lasted four months; natural secondary took only three. In August 2007, we chose four exceptional parcels, which were racked, assembled, and returned to barrel. At eighteen months the wine cleared, and was bottled without filtration. This fine chardonnay will benefit from a year or two in bottle, and develop fully over another six or seven. EB (2/08)

2007 Carmichael Zinfandel, \$28 (ATP Selection)

Vineyards parcels were crushed to three separate tanks for natural-yeast fermentation. We pressed at the sixth day, on average, and assembled the wine before it completed an uninoculated secondary, which finished the following February. Aged for twelve months in air-dried American oak barrels (a quarter new, a quarter one year old, the rest five years old), the wine clarified naturally through settling and quarterly racking. This full-flavored, elegant zinfandel was picked at moderate ripeness; approachable now, it will be at its best over the next four to five years. (EB 9/08)

2006 Lytton Estate Zinfandel, \$30 (ATP selection)

Occasionally, as in 2006, we hold out riper wines of excellent quality, because their inclusion would change the style of the Lytton Springs. Instead, we make a limited amount of Lytton Estate. The wine fermented on naturally occurring yeasts and aged for fifteen months in air-dried american oak. This well-structured, fullbodied zinfandel exhibits the briary black fruit and mineral notes typical of the vineyard. The 2006 will benefit from two to three years of bottle age and be most enjoyable over the next five to seven. JO (1/08)

2007 Santa Cruz Mountains Estate Cabernet/Merlot, \$40

In February, we chose eighteen beautifully-balanced lots from the Monte Bello vineyard for the Santa Cruz Mountains Estate. At summer rack, we added three more merlot lots. At the fourteenth month, tastings indicated that the rich press wine contributed greater complexity; it, too, was included. This fine wine shows ripe mountain fruit, integrated barrel spice, and elegant structure. Though enjoyable now, its tannins will resolve further as flavors mature over the next eight to ten years. EB (2/09)

2004 Lytton Estate Syrah, \$33 (ATP Selection)

Ridge has just over three acres of mature syrah and three and a half acres of younger vines at Lytton Springs West. In 2004, a syrah base was assembled from the most intense and distinct syrah lots, all of which had co-fermented with small amounts of viognier. By taste, grenache was added providing greater complexity to the fruit. Because matching a grape varietal to the climate and soil of a particular site is a costly decision to revise, we have planted several of the finest clones and field selections in both of the young vine parcels. PD/EB (4/06)

2006 Monte Bello, \$145

(Please ask about our Monte Bello Collector Futures Program)

Winter was wet and cold through April, but May's warm weather let the vines set a full crop. Summer was unusually warm; picking began on September 18, ahead of schedule. Though a cool October slowed ripening, all parcels were harvested within five weeks, and natural yeasts started the primary within three days. Uninoculated secondary began in tank; eighty percent of the thirty-six lots were racked to barrel for completion. Thirteen were selected for the first assemblage in late January. Additions of petit verdot and cabernet franc contributed depth. Balanced and elegant now, this exceptional vintage has the structure to carry it for twenty-five years or more. EB (3/08)