

RIDGE 2006

CALIFORNIA

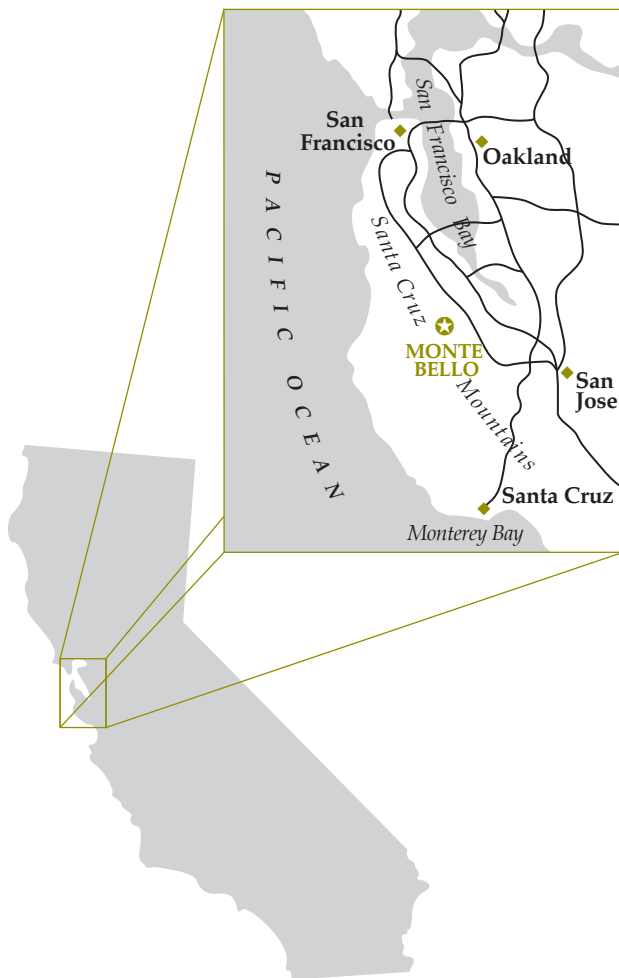
CHARDONNAY

MONTE BELLO®

2006 Chardonnay, Monte Bello, bottled April 2008

Though cold, wet weather delayed the growing season, by June the vines had set a full crop. Ripening continued through summer, but in August temperatures cooled again. We harvested over a thirty-day period. 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)

100% CHARDONNAY
14.4% alcohol by volume



History

In 1949 William Short, retired theologian and then-owner of the Ridge "middle" vineyard (2070' - 2390'), planted several acres of chardonnay, which provided the 1962 estate Monte Bello Chardonnay for the Ridge partners' first vintage. From 1962 to 1984, limited amounts of chardonnay were produced each year under the Monte Bello designation. By 1985, younger, replanted vines had begun to supplant the older vines, whose yields had dropped to a quarter-ton per acre. (To distinguish this wine from the Monte Bello, we called it Santa Cruz Mountains.) Fifteen years later, in 1999, the young vines had matured; we were able to select several exceptional parcels for a Monte Bello, a practice that continues to the present.

Vintage

Harvest Dates	15 September - 12 October
Grapes	Average Brix 24.0°
Fermentation	Whole-cluster pressed. Juice aerated and racked to barrel for natural primary and secondary.
Selection	Four of the ten Monte Bello Vineyard chardonnay parcels or fractions thereof
Aging	100% air-dried american oak barrels (26% new, 40% one and two years, 34% three, four and five years old)
Time in Barrel	Seventeen months

Vineyard

First RIDGE Monte Bello	1962
Location	Monte Bello Ridge, overlooking San Francisco from the Santa Cruz Mountains, a unique appellation separating the North Coast from the Central Coast, but not a part of either.
Elevation	1400' - 1900'
Soils	Decomposing Franciscan green stone mixed with clay, laid over fractured limestone.
Training	Head-trained, cane-pruned.
Yield	2.4 tons per acre

Growing Season

Rainfall	42 inches (slightly above average)
Bloom	Early budbreak in June; cool wet weather limited fruit formation.
Weather	Moderate summer and fall. Some rain towards the end of harvest.