

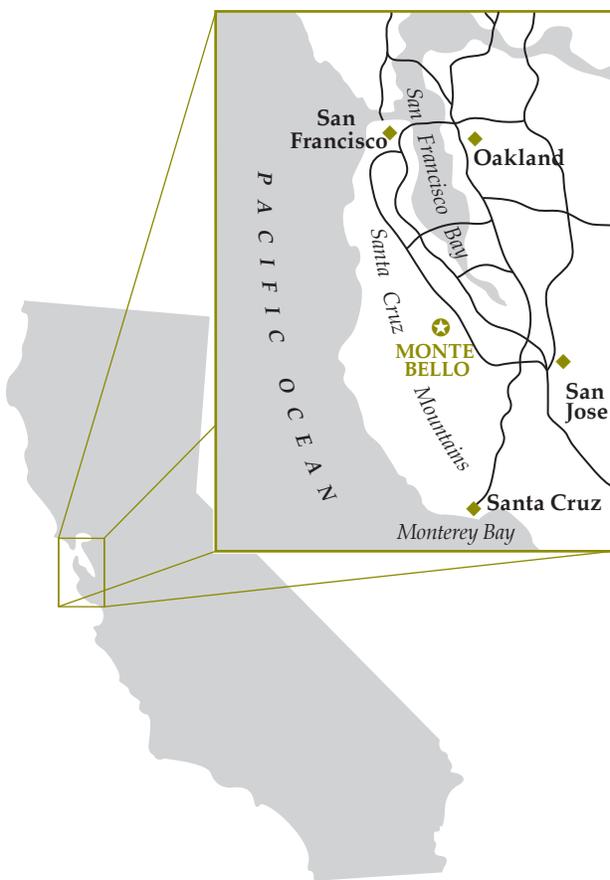
RIDGE ESTATE CHARDONNAY

2009

2009 Chardonnay, bottled January 2011

Winter storms brought below-average precipitation, but late spring rains supplied the vines enough water to survive an unusually warm summer. In each parcel, we picked the stressed vines before the "green" ones, giving us fourteen separate lots. After natural primary and secondary barrel fermentations, we racked off the lees in August. We then combined the finest lots for our new Estate Chardonnay designation. The firm acid is well-matched by rich, wonderfully-complex fruit. This fine wine will be most enjoyable over the next five years. EB (9/10)

100% CHARDONNAY
14.5% alcohol by volume



Winemaking

All estate-grown Monte Bello vineyard grapes, hand harvested. Whole-cluster pressed. Fermented on the native yeasts, followed by full malolactic on the naturally occurring bacteria. Minimum effective sulfur (35 ppm initially to barrels, 80 ppm over the course of aging). Pad filtered at bottling. In keeping with our philosophy of minimal intervention, this is the sum of our actions.

History

Ridge produced its first chardonnay in 1962 from fully mature vines planted in the late 1940s on the Monte Bello estate vineyard. Production never exceeded ten barrels, and the Monte Bello chardonnay was sold principally at the winery. Several great vintages, among them the 1973, '74, '79, and '84, showed that our cool climate and fractured limestone sub-soils were well suited to the varietal. By 1985, the old vines were producing less than a half-ton per acre; the younger ones, planted in the '70s, were providing the majority of grapes. These newer plantings were on the "lower" vineyard not yet farmed as part of the Monte Bello estate, so the wine was designated "Santa Cruz Mountains". The vines are long since included in the estate, and with this vintage we changed its name to Ridge Estate Chardonnay. In years when differences among the twelve small lots are sufficiently pronounced to warrant a separate bottling, we make a limited amount of Monte Bello Chardonnay as well.

Vineyard

**First RIDGE
Chardonnay
Santa Cruz
Mountains** 1985

Location Monte Bello Ridge, overlooking San Francisco from the Santa Cruz Mountains, an 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/loam over fractured limestone sub-soils

Vines 18.3 acres, planted 1976 - 1996

Training Head-trained, cane-pruned. Vertical trellis.

Yields Two to three tons per acre (full crop)

Growing Season

Rainfall 28 inches (below average)

Bloom Late May

Weather Dry winter, late spring rains followed by a mild summer. Warm fall harvest.

Vintage

Harvest Dates 12 - 27 September

Grapes Average Brix 24.3°

Fermentation Whole-cluster pressed and barrel fermented. Natural primary and secondary (malolactic).

Selection Seven of the ten Monte Bello Vineyard chardonnay parcels

Barrels 10% new, 15% one year old, 25% two year old, 30% three and four year old. 93% Air dried American Oak, 7% French oak.

Aging Fifteen months in barrel

RIDGE

P. O. Box 1810 Cupertino, CA 95015 408.867.3233
fax: 408.868.1350 www.ridgewine.com