

RIDGE 2014 CHARDONNAY ESTATE

100% CHARDONNAY MONTE BELLO ESTATE VINEYARD
SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS 14.3% ALCOHOL BY VOLUME

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 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 and were taken out. The younger vines planted in the '70s, provide the majority of grapes today. Initially these newer plantings were on the "lower" vineyard—not yet farmed as part of the Monte Bello estate—so the wine was called "Santa Cruz Mountains" and these vines have long since been included. Since 2008 the wine has been designated Ridge Estate Chardonnay. In years when differences among lots are sufficient to warrant a separate bottling, we make a limited amount of Monte Bello Chardonnay as well.

FIRST RIDGE CHARDONNAY SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS: 1985
FIRST RIDGE ESTATE CHARDONNAY (THE NEW DESIGNATION): 2009

GROWING SEASON

Rainfall: 11.8 inches (40% of normal)

Bloom: Mid-May

Weather: Very dry December & January; most of the rain fell February through April. Overall above average temperatures at Monte Bello.

VINTAGE

Harvest Dates: 27 August - 15 September

Grapes: Average Brix 23.4°

Fermentation: Grapes are whole-cluster pressed and barrel fermented. Natural primary and natural secondary (malolactic) fermentations.

Selection: Ten of the twelve Estate Chardonnay parcels.

Barrels: 94% air-dried american oak, 6% french oak; 23% new, 23% one and two years old, 54% three, four and five years old.

Aging: 14 months in barrel.

WINEMAKING

Sustainably farmed, hand harvested estate-grown Monte Bello vineyard grapes; whole-cluster pressed; fermented on the native yeasts; full malolactic on the naturally occurring bacteria; oak from barrel aging; minimum effective sulfur for this wine (25ppm initially to barrels, 74ppm over the course of aging); pad filtered at bottling. In keeping with our philosophy of minimal intervention, this is the sum of our actions.



2014 Estate Chardonnay, bottled 12/15
Warm weather brought bud-break in February, and advanced the season for our earliest chardonnay harvest ever. Picked by taste at moderate ripeness, the fruit was whole-cluster pressed and barrel fermented. Natural fermentations finished quickly, allowing early assemblage. Additional aging allowed the wine to clarify; we bottled without filtration. This superb chardonnay will be most enjoyable over the next five or six years. EB (8/15)



Monte Bello Ridge overlooks San Francisco from the Santa Cruz Mountains, a stand alone appellation separating the North Coast from the Central Coast but not a part of either.

Elevation: 1,400 - 2,000'

Soils: Fractured limestone soils overlaid with decomposing Franciscan green stone mixed with clay/loam.

Vines: 23.3 acres, planted 1976 - 2010.

Training: Head trained, cane pruned, vertical trellis, vertical shoot positioned.

Yields: 3.2 tons per acre

RIDGE
VINEYARDS

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