

# RIDGE 2016 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 2009 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: 21.9 inches (below normal)

Bloom: May

Weather: A very wet December and January helped ease the drought which emphatically ended in March. Cool weather in April reduced our crop a bit. Harvest started early September and finished quickly.

## VINTAGE

Harvest Dates: 7 - 15 September

Grapes: Average Brix 23.7°

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

Selection: Nine of the twelve Estate Chardonnay parcels.

Barrels: 85% air-dried american oak, 15% french oak; 11% new, 51% one and two years old, 38% three and four years old.

Aging: Eleven months in first-fill, another four months extended settling in neutral barrels.

## 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 (25 ppm initially to barrels, 45 ppm over the course of aging). In keeping with our philosophy of minimal intervention, this is the sum of our actions.

*2016 Estate Chardonnay, bottled 12/17*  
Winter was long and cold. For a second year, crop size was reduced by spring rain at bloom. Cool weather in August slowed ripening and pushed harvest out to mid-September. Barrel fermented, the wines remained on gross lees for ten months through the end of malolactic. Once assembled, it spent another four months in the cellar to fully clarify. Showing intense mountain fruit and elegance, it is enjoyable now. EB (8/17)



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.

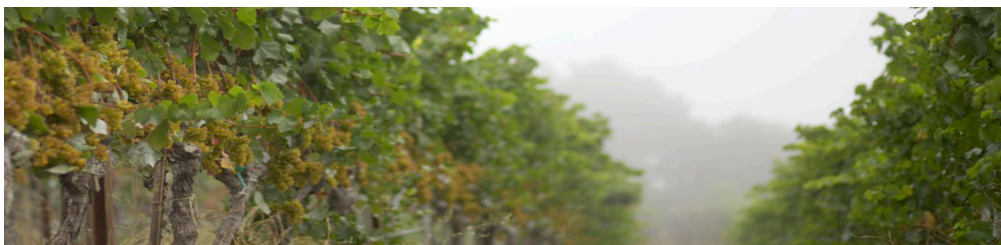
Elevation: 1,400 - 2,000'

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

Vines: 15.4 acres, planted 1982 - 1998.

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

Yields: 1.0 - 3.0 tons per acre



RIDGE  
VINEYARDS

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