

# RIDGE 2018 ESTATE CHARDONNAY

100% CHARDONNAY MONTE BELLO ESTATE VINEYARD  
SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS 14.2% 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

## VINTAGE

Rainfall: 26 inches (below normal)

Bloom: Late May

Weather: Winter rains were late to arrive, delivering a season's worth of rainfall in March. This gave Monte Bello 75% of the 26 inches of rain for the year, which is below normal. Spring remained cold with heavier than usual fog, slowing the progress for a late September harvest.

Harvest Dates: 19 - 26 September

Grapes: Average Brix 23.8°

## WINEMAKING

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: 94% air-dried American oak, 6% French oak; 12% new, 18% one- and two-year-old, 13% three- and four-year-old and 57% five- to nine-year-old.

Aging: Fifteen months

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. In keeping with our philosophy of minimal intervention, this is the sum of our actions.



*2018 Estate Chardonnay, bottled 12/19*  
Winter was late to arrive, delivering a season's worth of rainfall in March. Spring remained cold, followed by heavier-than-usual summer fog, slowing vine progress for a late September harvest. Thirteen parcels barrel fermented and sur lees aged for fifteen months. This fine chardonnay was an assemblage of barrels showing appealing fruit and elegance. It will be enjoyable over the next five years.  
EB (10/19)



## SITE

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: 3.0 tons per acre

RIDGE  
VINEYARDS

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