

RIDGE ESTATE CHARDONNAY

2024

100% CHARDONNAY (organically grown)
MONTE BELLO ESTATE VINEYARD 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

VINTAGE

Rainfall: 42-54" (above average)

Bloom: Late May

Weather: Cool start to season, from early June on weather was warm to hot, leading to a condensed harvest.

Harvest Dates: 7 - 14 September

Grapes: Average Brix 24.0°

WINEMAKING & TECHNICAL DATA

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

Barrels: 85% American and 15% French oak was used; 15% new, 20% one-year-old and, 65% four- and five-year old oak).

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 for this wine (35 ppm at crush, 106 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.



2024 Estate Chardonnay, bottled Jan 2026
High winds during flowering reduced yields by twenty percent. In late August a week of warm weather pushed ripeness forward. All seven small blocks were harvested the first week of September in just three days. Well defined, with ripe fruit and citrus notes typical of Monte Bello, this mountain-grown Chardonnay will develop fully over six years.

JO (11/25)



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: 19.6 acres, planted 1982 - 1998.

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

Yields: 2.5 tons per acre

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