



**WINEMAKER:** Ken Brown

**VINEYARD SOURCE:** 100% Sanford & Benedict Vineyard, Santa Rita Hills. Planted by Richard Sanford and Michael Benedict in 1971, this vineyard is the birthplace of the Santa Rita Hills appellation and helped bring recognition to the great potential of the region. This Chardonnay comes from the original vines planted to clone 108, which became the most widely planted Chardonnay clone in California. Situated on a north-facing slope, the vineyard is cooled by ocean breezes and coastal fog. The soil type is the Botella Series, a composition of both clay and loam with a high calcareous content, which drains well and helps keep yields low.

**VINTAGE:** The 2005 vintage was characterized by plentiful winter rainfall, mild temperatures and a gradual ripening of the grapes, which allowed us to pick this block at optimum maturity. Above average rainfall resulted in vigorous spring vine growth and healthy canopies. The grower helped keep yields in balance with careful farming, including shoot thinning and leaf pulling, to ensure excellent flavor development and concentration in the grapes. Temperatures throughout the growing season were characteristically cool with no prolonged heat spells. Chardonnay from the Sanford & Benedict Vineyard was harvested on October 15.

**WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS:** This small bottling of Chardonnay comes from a vineyard I first experienced in 1976. The old vines are especially expressive, so a minimalist approach to winemaking allows the character and integrity of the fruit to shine through. The grapes were hand picked and gently pressed as whole clusters. After settling in tank for 24 hours, the juice was racked to 60-gallon French oak barrels for fermentation. The wine was 100% barrel fermented with 100% malo-lactic fermentation. The Chardonnay aged *sur lie* for 11 months in French oak, with 10% new oak in the barrel mix.

Well balanced and harmonious, this Chardonnay is stylish and crisp with fresh aromas of white peach and green apple, accented by hints of seashell and an elegant minerality. A lift of natural acidity in the core is surrounded by a richly layered texture. The wine culminates in a fresh, resonating finish.

#### **TECHNICAL DATA**

T.A.: 6.56 g/l

pH: 3.29

Alcohol: 14.2%

Sugg. Retail Price: \$30.00

Production: 227 cases