



GROWING SEASON

2012 was truly a phenomenal growing season—every winemaker's dream. Spring temperatures were cool but not too cold with minimal rain and no frost scares during budbreak. A two-week run of warm weather occurred in May during bloom, leading to optimum fertilization. Summer temperatures were ideal: very moderate with sunny days and few heat spikes; mornings were foggy but not cold or wet. The copious quantity of clusters on the grapevines was concerning at first, but the fruit tasted balanced and concentrated, so we let the plants continue their natural course. After a long, gorgeous summer, the harvest was fast and furious, with white and red grapes ripening at the same time. The biggest surprise was how absolutely stunning this bountiful crop tasted in the tanks; it was our highest-quality, highest-yielding vintage to date.

VINEYARDS

The final blend of 2012 Jordan Chardonnay began with nearly 20 different vineyard blocks from eight sites on the east side of the Russian River. Two factors are paramount in the selection of our growers: vineyard sites with moderately cool temperatures that allow for lively fruit and crisp acidity and well-drained, gravelly soils that provide both physiologically mature fruit and mineral characters in the finish of the wine. It is this necessary combination of climate and soil that shares a common thread with the White Burgundies that inspire our style of winemaking.

VITICULTURE

2012 vintage was a model of consistency in weather the entire growing season, making the winegrower's job much easier than 2011. Due to the near-perfect weather during budbreak and bloom, the crop was plentiful from the beginning, giving us the opportunity to drop excess fruit after both fruit set and cluster counting. This thinning technique helped to maintain an even balance in the canopy throughout the summer. Leaf pulling and shoot positioning occurred over several weeks in June under ideal weather conditions. Clusters were bigger and heavier than usual, but after the dismal fruit yields of 2011, growers and winemakers alike were hesitant to thin the crop. In a typical year, we like to do a second leafing in late summer to let more sunlight into the fruit zone but decided against that tactic in 2012, opting to leave the canopy full to protect the fruit from potential sunburn. Warm temperatures prevailed and the extra shade proved useful to the big clusters. Irrigation was stopped about six weeks prior to harvest, allowing the vines to focus their energy on the fruit versus the canopy's leaves. The vines needed very little manipulation from our viticultural team in 2012.

HARVEST

All fruit was handpicked in the coolness of the night and early morning hours before sunrise, from September 18 to October 7, with sugar levels averaging 23.9 Brix. Harvest was a seemingly endless run of days with ideal, cool temperatures from evening to late morning. The large clusters were exceptionally clean without any threat from rain to compromise picking decisions. The final selection of grapes had beautiful, intense, fruit flavors and bright, crisp acids. For our flavor profile, it was truly a dream vintage.