

FRANCISCAN
ESTATE
NAPA VALLEY



2011

Napa Valley

CUVÉE SAUVAGE CHARDONNAY



SENSORY EVALUATION:

Appearance: Delicate lemon yellow

Aromas: An opulent, complex bouquet of honeyed Fuji apple, ripe pear, honeysuckle, vanilla, and a hint of fresh citrus wafts out of the glass with creamy undertones of melon and minerality.

Flavors: Full bodied, yet elegant and graceful, it offers an irresistible counterpoint of rich, creamy flavors impeccably balanced by bright, citrusy freshness. Opening with sweet ripe pear, honeysuckle, and vanilla bean, it evolves into lush layers of baked apple, crème brûlée, honey, and citrus on a foundation of minerality, fresh cream, and crisp acidity. Persistent, rich, citrus-infused finish.

WINEMAKER'S NOTES: Franciscan Estate was the first Napa Valley winery to produce a wild-yeast fermented Chardonnay, starting in 1987. Following traditional Burgundian techniques, yeast are not added to the juice, but instead we let the native yeasts that live on the grapes perform the fermentation. Unlike cultured yeasts, wild yeasts come in many strains, reflective of the vineyard terroir. (In French, "sauvage" means "wild.") They work in a relay, and as one strain finishes, another starts, each adding its own personality to the wine, giving layers of complexity—which is why we go to the extra effort of "going wild."

For Cuvée Sauvage, we use exclusively our finest lots from cool Carneros, with the heart of the blend coming from our estate Larsen Vineyard. The Dijon clones planted provide concentrated fruit character and give steeliness, vibrancy, and complexity to Cuvée Sauvage, with consistency year to year of the wild-yeast expression.

—Janet Myers, Winemaker

GROWING SEASON: With a wet spring and very cool growing season, the 2011 vintage produced white wines of great minerality, elegance, and vibrancy. The grapes ripened slowly in the mild conditions and our Chardonnay harvest began on September 16, about two weeks later than usual. Our Larsen Estate vineyard was harvested even later. We began picking on September 26. As the last of the Carneros Chardonnay came in on October 1, we were grateful for the warm, dry harvest conditions in September. The extended growing season allowed a generous amount of hang time, which translated to excellent flavor maturity and optimum sugar-to-acid balance.

WINEMAKER: Janet Myers

APPELLATION: Carneros, Napa Valley

BRIX AT HARVEST: 23.5°–24.5°

VARIETAL COMPOSITION: 100% Chardonnay

FERMENTATION: 100% barrel fermented, sur lie aged

AGING: 100% French oak, 86% new, 14 months

COOPERS: Dargaud & Jaegle, François Frere and Boutes

pH: 3.35

TA: 6.9g/L

ALCOHOL: 14.5%

RELEASE DATE: March 2013

CASES PRODUCED: 3,500

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