

Let's *Wine*
About it



ALBARIÑO

Pronunciation:
"alba-reen-yo"

Taste: On the nose, expect aromas of nectarine, lime, and grapefruit, with subtle hints of honeysuckle and occasionally beeswax. On the palate, Albariño wines have a weighty mid-palate and mouth-watering acidity that finishes with salinity and sometimes a subtle bitter note (like green almond or citrus pith). Most Albariño are drunk young and fresh however, due to the high acidity and phenolic structure (from the grapes' thick skins) it has incredible potential for aging.

Style: Medium White Wine

Description: Albariño wine is a delightfully refreshing coastal white that grows well in Monterey County. It's loved for its rich stone fruit flavors, a hint of salinity, and zippy acidity.

Food Pairing: Lighter meats, fish, and seafood sing with Albariño. Try it with ceviche, seafood risotto, grilled (or fried) fish tacos, oysters, mussels, and clams. Soft cheeses like burrata, or semi-hard cheeses such as manchego, gouda and salty feta will be killer alongside these fresh and bright wines.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

In order to better serve our members, we need to receive any new info and changes regarding your status (i.e., change of address, new credit card number, etc.) by the 20th of each month.

PLEASE NOTIFY US BY CALLING (888) 646-5446, Ext. 13.
















Any information received after the 20th of each month will not take effect until the following month. Change of address updates, for the upcoming shipment, called in after the 20th, may be subject to a special handling fee.

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Mix & Match

ANY OF THE CURRENT OR PREVIOUS CLUB WINES TO RECEIVE 25% OFF 12 BOTTLES OR 20% OFF 6

JANUARY SELECTIONS	PRICES EXPIRE 03/31/2023	REGULAR PRICE*	12-BOTTLE DISCOUNT PRICE*	6-BOTTLE DISCOUNT PRICE*
 Rocas Del Rio 2021 Carbonic Red		\$25.00	\$18.75	\$20.00
 Noble Vines 2021 446 Chardonnay		\$16.00	\$12.00	\$12.80
 Noble Vines 2020 667 Pinot Noir		\$18.00	\$13.50	\$14.40
 Comanche 2021 Dog & Pony Albariño		\$30.00	\$22.50	\$24.00
DECEMBER SELECTIONS	PRICES EXPIRE 02/28/2023			
 Potbelly Vintners NVV Port		\$50.00	\$37.50	\$40.00
 Canys 2020 Pinot Gris		\$18.00	\$13.50	\$14.40
 District 7 2020 Pinot Noir		\$20.00	\$15.00	\$16.00
 Russell Joyce 2020 Chenin Blanc		\$40.00	\$30.00	\$32.00
NOVEMBER SELECTIONS	PRICES EXPIRE 01/31/2023			
 Metz Road 2019 Pinot Noir		\$35.00	\$26.25	\$28.00
 Craftwork 2020 Pinot Grigio		\$20.00	\$15.00	\$16.00
 Craftwork 2020 Zinfandel		\$20.00	\$15.00	\$16.00
 Metz Road 2020 Chardonnay		\$30.00	\$22.50	\$24.00
PRIVATE RESERVE CLUB	PRICES EXPIRE 02/28/2023			
 Mission Trail Vineyards 2020 Friars' Reserve Meritage		\$45.00	\$33.75	\$36.00
 Pianetta 2019 Sangiovese		\$40.00	\$30.00	\$32.00
 Exposition NVV Sparkling		\$29.00	\$21.75	\$23.20

TO ORDER, CALL TOLL-FREE: 888-646-5446
*PRICES LISTED REFLECT PRICE PER BOTTLE. NO OTHER DISCOUNTS APPLY.

TASTING MONTEREY

A WINE ENTHUSIAST'S MONTHLY JOURNEY THROUGH MONTEREY'S WINE COUNTRY



Missing our view?
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The Wide Reach of CHARDONNAY

Chardonnay... What are your first thoughts when you hear the varietal's name? White, golden, buttery, creamy, oaky, tropical fruit flavors - all easily come to mind. The varietal is an intriguing subject as it is grown and produced by wine rookies and veterans alike around the globe. Chardonnay produces menial, mass-produced wines and highly specialized wines alike.



Everyone has heard of Chardonnay, but where did it originate? You've perhaps noticed that Chardonnay appears to be from pretty much every wine region out there, and you see it from places you didn't even know produce wine. Chardonnay's original home is Burgundy in eastern France, which also happens to be Pinot Noir's motherland (interesting to note that Monterey County shares the distinction of producing world renowned Chardonnay and Pinot Noir wines).

Some of the finest Chardonnays are from Burgundy, although the history of the grape there is ironic. Historically, the grape was so widely planted and used for wine it was generically referred to as "White Burgundy." Today is quite a different story as Chardonnay is revered and held to great esteem. Due to French labeling traditions, you'll not often see "Chardonnay" on a French wine bottle, but popular growing areas you may recognize include Montrachet, Côte de Beaune, Mersault, and Mâconnais. These Chards tend to present butteriness, but not oakiness.



In France, Chardonnay is also grown outside of Burgundy, notably in the Chablis and Champagne regions, and in Chablis, Chardonnay is often quite the opposite of both buttery and oaky. Yes, "Chablis" is actually Chardonnay, despite the fact that it became used as a general term for any mass-produced white wine. And you may be surprised that, as in France, the majority of sparkling wines in the world are made from Chardonnay grapes.

Why are Chardonnay wines seemingly produced everywhere? To explain, we need to jump into the vineyards and dive into the barrels. However, the quick answer is that it's reputed as one of the easier varietals to

grow and coax into wine - don't think this indicates though that it is only a mediocre varietal unable to display greatness.

In the vineyards, Chardonnay is the typical make or break varietal. It's the varietal most often planted by a new winery in a new area...the thought being that if one can produce a good wine with it, they will have graduated and can move on to other varietals.

That is not to say that it's a carefree endeavor at all. The varietal is early budding, making it susceptible to spring frost damage. The vine is also prone to a host of other vineyard complications, including being highly vigorous and requiring intensive pruning and canopy management. Harvest time is also very critical as the grapes quickly lose their acidity just after ripening, and if they are not harvested promptly, the juice produced from the grapes will suffer for it.

Continued Inside

January Referrals



Refer a friend to the Monterey Wine Club, and after they join, you get a \$20.00 Gift Card!



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Monthly Wine Selections

ROCAS DEL RIO - 2021 Carbonic Red



Rocas Del Rio (River Rocks) are fun new wines for Joyce Wine Company that bring a fresh perspective of classic varietals grown in the rocky soils along the Arroyo Seco River. These unpretentious wines are all about the little joys and refreshing moments in the day to day. Rocas del Rio are best served chilled down to drink up in good company.

The fruit was harvested from the Arroyo Seco AVA. This AVA is recognized as having the longest growing season in California. Strong daily winds that bring cool fog from the Monterey Bay force the grapes to spend more time on the vine building flavor and complexity. Extremely rocky well-drained alluvial soils are the base for creating wines processing freshness & minerality. The combination of sand, granite, and shale loam soils with the ever present marine influence provide the perfect conditions for bright, zippy, and mineral-driven wines. Aromas of underripe strawberry, black cherry, long pepper, crushed granite with flavors of red currant, strawberry stem, beet root and raisin.

85% Grenache, 10% Syrah, 5% Gamay

13.0% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2028

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

NOBLE VINES - 2021 446 Chardonnay



At Noble Vines, they take the most admired vines to develop wines with concentrated flavors and smooth textures. Perfect on their own to relax and unwind or bring along to share with friends.

Chardonnay vine selection 4 is exceptional because it offers an unparalleled range of flavors. These flavors vary, according to location, from typical Chardonnay flavors of green apple and citrus to tropical fruit such as pineapple, lychee and mango – which distinguish Chardonnay 4 from variations grown in France. Selection 4 does especially well in their vineyard block 46. Hence, the designation “446”. Grown in the San Bernabe sub-appellation of Monterey, one of the coolest wine regions in California.

Aromas and flavors of pineapple, white peach, ripe Bartlett pear and marshmallow. Creamy mid-palate, slightly minerality with a long finish.

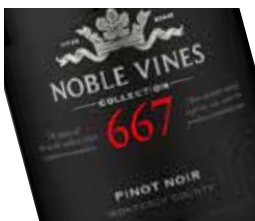
100% Chardonnay

14.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2026

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

NOBLE VINES - 2020 Pinot Noir (Club Red)



Numbers don't lie and neither does Noble Vines's legacy. That's why each number on their bottle represents a superior vine stock that, over centuries, have been proven to produce exceptional wine. The best brings out the best.

Vine selection 667 is one of the prestigious “Dijon clones” brought to California from the Cote d'Or in Burgundy, France. This vine stock forms tight, compact clusters that generate deep color and more layers of tannins than any other Pinot Noirs previously grown in California.

Aromas of black cherry, currant, vanilla and toast with flavors of boysenberry, lavender and currant ice cream. Full, supple mouthfeel, with medium plush tannins and a clean finish.

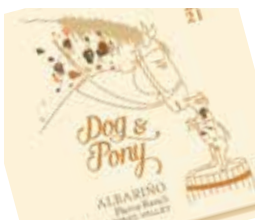
100% Pinot Noir

13.5% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2026

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

COMANCHE - 2021 Dog & Pony Albariño (Club Blanc)



Comanche Cellars is a winery named after Comanche, owner Michael Simons' horse when he was ten years old. This trusty childhood companion was an important part of a young life, and his name is a loving tribute to this old friend. In his honor, Comanche Cellars wines are boldly flavored steeds, built to go the distance, with sure-footed speed and confidence. Michael is proud that Comanche's name and shoes are on every bottle of his wine.

Fragrant honeysuckle on the nose, notes of honeydew and pear, create a luscious fruity bouquet for your palate. Flavors of light citrus enhance this crisp, flavorful varietal from Spain's renowned northwestern region of Galicia. Zippy acidity and a lovely mouthfeel make this easy go-to wine a crowd favorite.

100% Albariño

12.7% Alcohol

Cellar Through 2023

Comments: _____ ◇ Great ◇ Good ◇ So-So

Cover Article Continued

The grape is famous for its ability to adapt to conditions it is exposed to. Chardonnay is considered to be “malleable” by growers and winemakers. This means that it is very eager to embrace its terroir conditions and also a vintner's particular style.

In winemaking, Chardonnay is made in all forms from still to sparkling to late harvests. After considering terroir conditions that may influence the grape, the two most important factors impacting Chardonnay wines are oak and malolactic fermentation, both of which result in two characteristics most often associated with Chardonnay wines: oakiness and butteriness. The wine would not have these characteristics otherwise, explaining why you see new world Chardonnays which have neither oak or butter and are instead lighter and fruitier in style. These wines tend to exhibit tangy flavors such as green apples and tropical fruits. If malolactic fermentation (sometimes referred to as secondary fermentation) is not introduced by a winemaker, butteriness will not be present. Also, if the wine is not oaked during fermentation and later barreling, there will be no oakiness. Other winemaking influences include temperature during fermentation and time spent aging “on the lees” (i.e. the wine's contact with dead yeast cells after fermentation - called sur lie aging).



Let's talk food pairing for a moment. Chardonnay is actually considered difficult to match with food, especially heavily oaked and buttery Chards. Although if you think about it, match oak to oak/toasty flavors, and match butter to butter as much as possible. Heavily-oaked Chards can pair well with smoke-flavored and spicy cuisine. And buttery cream sauces are a great fit for buttery Chardonnays.

In the U.S., one can find Chardonnay vines planted in more than 30 states. Although, let's be honest ... Chardonnays from Iowa or New Jersey really don't compare with those from California. Chardonnay was first planted for commercial production by Wente Vineyards in the Livermore Valley in the 1940s. Monterey, Santa Barbara, Napa and Sonoma Counties produce the most prominent Californian Chards. California's Chardonnay first reached acclaim and world-recognition when Napa's Chateau Montelena beat out French competitors in the 1976 blind tasting event known as the Judgment of Paris (Monterey's own Chalone Vineyards came in third place at the event).

These days in Monterey, we still find a wide variety of Chardonnay wines produced and offer some of the finest, not only in California, but in the world. The coastal influenced Santa Lucia Highlands AVA, in particular, is a spectacular setting for Chardonnay vines, which is reflected in its numerous outstanding Chardonnay wines.

In recent years, there has been a trend for winemakers to move away from the oaky or buttery style Chardonnays in favor of producing “clean” and crisp wines, often highlighting muted pineapple or apple undertones. Although these stainless steel aged and/or no malolactic fermentation Chards are interesting and savored by some, it's clear that there will always be a significant group who love the big oaky/buttery Chardonnay. Here at A Taste of Monterey, we're honored to showcase some of the best Chardonnays found anywhere.

-Bryce Ternet, Contributing editor and author of three books. See www.mbryceter.net.com.

Entertain with Wine



Sparkling Cocktail

Ingredients

- 1 white sugar cube
- 2 dashes angostura bitters or other bitters
- 2 tsp brandy (optional)
- chilled champagne, to top up
- orange twist, to garnish

Directions

Put the sugar cube in the bottom of a champagne flute. Shake the bitters onto the sugar cube and let it soak in for a few seconds. Add the brandy, if using, then top up with champagne. Twist the orange peel over the top of the glass to release some of the oils, then drop into the glass to serve.