



Charles Ranch Chardonnay
Sonoma Coast
2009

Vineyard Character

The Charles Ranch was once one of the largest sheep ranches in Sonoma County. George Charles was a fourth generation rancher in the vast rugged hills and raised 2,000 head of sheep along with a small herd of bison. George's son-in-law, Lee Martinelli Sr., was a successful third generation grape grower and consulted with George as to which grape variety would be the most suitable to plant in this unique climate. This distinct micro-climate is two miles inland from the Pacific coastline at Fort Ross and is ideally suited for growing Burgundian varietals. In 1980 George sold his herd and used the steep 14 acre pasture to plant Chardonnay, becoming a pioneer of grape growing in an area that is now considered a prime viticultural region.

Wine Statistics

The Chardonnay grapes are picked between 24 and 26 degrees brix to ensure mature ripe fruit flavors. The fruit is hand selected at harvest time by Lee Martinelli Sr., who tastes them and chooses when to pick according to the developed concentration of flavors in the berries. The wine is 100% barrel fermented with wild yeast, resting in 50% new French oak for 10 months before bottling. The wine is neither heat nor cold stabilized, and is un-fined and un-filtered, clarified only by racking before bottling.

Case Production: 301

Tasting Notes

The 2009 Charles Ranch Chardonnay has aromas of freshly cut grass, pear, and honeysuckle. This wine has bright acid and flavors of Casaba melon, lemon curd, and toasty caramel sauce.

Historical Acclaim

2007 Vintage

- 92 points Josh Reynolds, Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar
- 91 points Robert M Parker Jr. The Wine Advocate

2006 Vintage

- 94 points Josh Reynolds, Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar
- 93 points Robert M Parker Jr. The Wine Advocate

Winemaker: Bryan Kvamme

Consulting Winemaker: Helen Turley