



## 2017 Los Carneros Chardonnay

Established in 1871 and noted as the premier Napa Valley winery, Vine Cliff Vineyard and Winery was resurrected from ghost winery status by the Sweeney family in the 1980s. Our wines are reflective of our unique and highly acclaimed terroir and made in a balanced style with layer upon layer of subtlety and complexity.

**THE VINEYARD:** Vine Cliff Winery's picturesque twelve-acre Estate Chardonnay vineyard is in the heart of the Los Carneros appellation. The Los Carneros appellation is ideal for growing Chardonnay because of its cooler climate. The cool foggy mornings in conjunction with the afternoon breezes off San Pablo Bay allow the grapes to have a longer than average hang time for flavor development, while still retaining higher natural acidity. The 2017 growing season began with an early bud break, frosts and variable weather during bloom. This coupled with another dry winter resulted in small berries and clusters creating lower yields. Cool summer conditions helped us retain good natural acidity and flavor maturity. Moderate September temperatures provided for an extended harvest and allowed for additional hangtime which helped to achieve optimal ripeness and maturity.

**TASTING NOTES:** Our 2017 Los Carneros Chardonnay opens up with inviting citrus notes of Meyer lemon and mandarin orange, followed by floral notes of honey suckle, and jasmine. A second breath of wine takes you to a place of minerals, with hints of flint and wet stones. The gentle kiss of oak seems to seep through the fruit ever so slowly. The beauty of this vintage is reflected by the perfect balance between fruit, oak, and acid. The palate exhibits a depth of fruit flavors ranging from golden delicious apple, tangelo, and nectarine. On the finish the wine ends with a medley of honey, citrus, and floral notes.

**VINTAGE NOTES:** The year began with abundant rainfall, followed by a mild Spring resulting in extended flowering with little shatter. A Labor Day weekend heatwave kicked harvest into high gear, then cool weather allowed sugar levels to return to normal. By October 8, nearly 90 percent of the 2017 grape tonnage was in when warm, fierce winds fueled an unprecedented firestorm. Napa Valley's wine-makers remain committed to upholding the region's reputation for making some of the world's finest wines and early articles about the 2017 vintage describe the wines with words such as "finesse," "great complexity of flavor" and "elegant". (Napa Vintners 2017 Vintage Recap)

**VINEYARD NOTES:** The Los Carneros Estate vineyard is a gentle south facing slope set between the foggy and windswept San Francisco Bay marshes and the sunny foothills of Mt. Veeder. This locale allows for moderate daytime highs and cool nights resulting in fresh aromas and balancing acidity. The clay loam soil is shallow and limits vine vigor and yield further intensifying the flavor and aroma profile of the resulting wines.

**FERMENTATION PROTOCOL:** Grapes from individual vineyard blocks were hand-picked separately in the cool early morning, then carefully hand sorted at the winery before whole cluster pressing. Pressed long and slow in the Crémant/Champagne style to minimize phenolic extraction, and maximizing freshness and acidity. After cold settling, the juice was gravity racked into French oak barrels for fermentation and aging.

**SOIL:** Haire clay loam    **ELEVATION:** 130'

**VARIETAL COMPOSITION:** 100% Chardonnay, a blend of 30% Wente, 10% Clone 95, 30% Clone 4, 25% Clone 96 and 5% Clone 548.

**COOPERAGE COMPOSITION:** 25% new French Oak, tight grain, medium toast, 75% neutral French Oak.

**BARREL AGING:** This wine was aged on its lees for 11 months in 25% new, 75% neutral French Oak barrels, before being gently racked out of barrel and aged an additional five months in stainless.

**Harvest Brix:** ave. 22.5    **TA:** 0.64g/100mL    **Alcohol:** 13.9%    **pH:** 3.40

**PRODUCTION QUANTITY:** 2,355 cases (6 pack)



**Wine Spectator 90**  
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