



ALEXANDER VALLEY VINEYARDS



2014 Estate Chardonnay

Our estate is bordered by the Russian River and since 1975 we have showcased this location with our Estate Chardonnay. The vines are planted on some of the coolest sites on our estate where morning fog is the norm. During the growing season the temperature drops between 40 to 50 degrees from day to night.

The unprecedented drought in California was national news and everyone seemed to talk about our weather with dire predictions for much of 2014. A mild winter and spring caused early bud break, but the overall length of the growing season was similar to past years. The lack of rain did not impact our fruit due to moderate temperatures throughout the growing season, and as a result the grapes had terrific concentration and superb fruit flavors at harvest.

We harvest 70% of our Chardonnay at night when the grapes are cool to retain the natural acidity, then cold ferment those lots in stainless steel, without malolactic fermentation or barrel aging to highlight the citrus and green apple flavors. To add balance to the wine, we whole cluster press 30% of the best fruit and barrel ferment that portion in French oak barrels. The barrel fermented lots underwent malolactic fermentation and aged on the lees for 6-8 months to develop roundness and body.

There are aromas of apple, pear, fresh fruit, pineapple, vanilla and floral notes in the glass. The 2014 is a rich creamy wine with tropical flavors of apple, pear, citrus, peach, apricot and fig. This vintage has nice balance and a very long aftertaste.

Food Pairing: Roast chicken, seafood with lemon/citrus sauces and creamy pastas.



Awards:

2014: 90 points - Gold Medal: *Winemaker Challenge*

2014: 89 points - Wine Advocate

2014: 88 points: *Ultimate Wine Challenge*

2014: Silver Medal: *San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition & Monterey Wine Festival*

- Profile:**
- Rich, yet well balanced with stone fruit flavors
 - Lightly oaked

About Alexander Vineyards:

Whole-cluster pressing is a technique used to extract juice from ripe grapes. Rather than sending grape clusters first through the destemmer, where stems are removed leaving behind individual berries, the whole clusters go directly into the press. Pressing the whole clusters prevents oxidation by keeping juice exposure to oxygen to an absolute minimum, thus virtually eliminating extraction of bitter tannins from stems and seeds, and producing juice with uncommonly pure varietal aromas and flavors. Whole cluster pressing takes longer than the traditional "destem and press" process for white grapes because fewer whole clusters will fit in each press cycle compared to destemmed fruit; juice yields also are slightly lower.

Technical Data

Grapes: 100% Chardonnay

Harvest Dates: September 3 - 14, 2014

Barrel Aging: 70% stainless steel, 30% barrel fermented in French Oak and aged on the lees for 6-8 months

First Vintage: 1975

Alcohol: 14% **pH:** 3.51 **TA:** 6.2 g/L

Closure: 750ml cork 375ml stelvin

UPC: 750ml 0-85798 01872-7 **SRP:** \$18
375 ml 0-85798 01871-0 **SRP:** \$10



Healdsburg ~ Sonoma County ~ California

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Alexander Valley Vineyards is well known for top Cabernet Sauvignon, but, one trip to the 600 acre Wetzel Family Estate and you'll quickly see why we are also equally proud of our Chardonnay. Our property is bordered by the Mayacamas Mountains to the east and the Russian River to the west. The river runs the length of the valley and provides a conduit pulling cooling fog through Healdsburg and into the Alexander Valley each day.

In 1966 we started planting Chardonnay on the estate's coolest sites by the river and we, like neighboring growers, sold our fruit to other wineries. From the beginning Alexander Valley Chardonnay was known for great balance and good acidity.

In the early '70s, California wines started getting attention outside of the state. In 1976 a tasting in Paris was featured in Time Magazine after two Napa based wineries took top honors with their California wines. But a Sonoma newspaper revealed the rest of the story with this headline: *"Napa didn't grow the famed grapes"* ¹.

Wine Spectator wrote about the winning Chardonnay: " the *famous* tasting where its 1973 Alexander Valley Chardonnay won a blind tasting, vanquishing competition that included white Burgundies and other California Chardonnays".² Incredibly, one tasting in France brought worldwide attention to California Chardonnay and the Alexander Valley just as Hank Wetzel was getting ready to release his first wines.



Prior to starting the winery, Hank apprenticed at top Chardonnay producers including Freemark Abbey, Stony Hill and Hanzell.

In 1975 he crushed our estate Chardonnay grapes for the first vintage at AVV's newly bonded winery.

Decades later, our Estate Chardonnay continues to showcase the unique place we call home and receives accolades from wine drinkers and critics across the country.

(First vintage at AVV in 1975)

So do you still think Alexander Valley Vineyards is only about red wine?