

2011 Adelsheim Caitlin's Reserve Chardonnay



THE PLACE

Grapes for this wine were predominately sourced from Crawford Beck Vineyard (46%) in the Eola-Amity Hills. Two other vineyards made a contribution: Boulder Bluff Vineyard (18%) in the Chehalem Mountains AVA and Stoller Vineyard (36%) which is located at the southern edge of the Dundee Hills.

THE WINE

The very complex aroma profile of this wine shows artful layers of hazelnuts, lemon blossom, fresh apples, honey and baking spices. Beautifully balanced on the palate by the vibrant acidity found in our Northern wine region, it features a long, polished finish and a rich, velvety mouthfeel. Pair it with poached salmon, lobster, smoked meats and cheeses.



Wine Background:

Oregon's pioneer winegrowers planted using selections of Chardonnay that had been chosen for California's climate. They were very late ripening - in Oregon, two or three weeks after Pinot noir. In 1974, David Adelsheim worked harvest in Burgundy and realized that the vines there produced fewer and smaller grape clusters and ripened in tandem with Pinot noir. He suspected that planting clones with these characteristics might be a boon for Oregon's wine industry. David followed through by helping create a system at Oregon State University that dealt with all the red tape and mandatory quarantines to allow both Chardonnay and Pinot noir clones to be imported. These so-called "Dijon" clones were eventually released for planting in 1989. As the vines matured, we've found that the resulting wines are much different than what Oregon could formerly produce, much more in the direction of white Burgundy.

Growing Season:

A cool spring caused bud break to occur 22 days later than average on May 8th. However, perfect warm weather during bloom (which occurred on July 7th) allowed for an amazing fruit set. Large cluster sizes warranted heavy cluster thinning, leaving a low amount of clusters - at times below one cluster per shoot on average - to ripen. Berry ripening progressed throughout the cooler summer until veraison occurred on September 13th (20 days behind). The first part of September brought excellent warm and dry weather with highs in the 80's and 90's. October began with cool temperatures, highs in the 60's, and high rainfall. One week prior to harvest the weather took a turn for the better providing near perfect conditions for the rest of harvest. The cool season and long hang time allowed the grapes to develop slowly, increasing complexity and flavor profiles. Grapes for this Chardonnay were harvested on October 20, 21, and 27.

Winemaking:

The techniques used to produce this wine are, unsurprisingly, quite similar to those employed by the finest vintners in Burgundy. The grapes were hand-picked and pressed as whole clusters with a gentle bladder press. The wine was 100% barrel fermented in small French oak barrels (17% new). Over the next two months, the lees were stirred occasionally to add complexity and enhance textural richness. Sur lie aging for ten months allowed the Chardonnay and oak flavors to meld, and for the tannins to elongate, thereby softening and rounding the wine. The first racking came at bottling time, when the final blend was assembled. This wine was bottled on August 15, 2012.



Vineyard

Appellation: Willamette Valley
Production: 461 six-bottle cases

Wine

Alcohol: 13.5%
pH: 3.15

ADELSHEIM

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