

2012 Adelsheim Caitlin's Reserve Chardonnay



THE PLACE

Grapes for this wine were predominately sourced from Boulder Bluff Vineyard (47.5%) in the Chehalem Mountains AVA. Two other vineyards made a contribution: Crawford Beck Vineyard (29.5%) in the Eola-Amity Hills AVA and Stoller Vineyard (23%) 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:

The 2012 growing season got off to a slightly slower than average start, with bud break occurring on April 23rd, about a week later than normal for the Willamette Valley. Weather during bloom (the third week of June) was close to ideal, with minimal rainfall towards the end of flowering. Reduced berry set led to smaller clusters and lower yields than the prior vintage. A warmer and drier than average growing season resulted in extremely low disease pressure and provided ample sunshine for the grapes to develop beautifully complex flavor profiles. Veraison occurred around the end of August and the Willamette Valley experienced excellent ripening conditions until harvest. Picking of the Chardonnay for this wine occurred October 3rd, 8th and 11th. The remarkable growing season of 2012 resulted in clean fruit with intense colors and concentrated flavors.

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 (36% 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 12, 2013.



Vineyard

Appellation: Willamette Valley
Production: 697 six-bottle cases

Wine

Alcohol: 13.5%
pH: 3.17

ADELSHEIM

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