

Dancing Crow Vineyards

2021 Chardonnay – Lake County

Winemaker Sensory Impressions

This Chardonnay showcases aromas of green apples, white hedge flowers and lime blossoms that gracefully make way for flavors of poached Russet apples, Meyer lemon and honeycomb, that are best described as a combination of wildflowers and beeswax. The mouthfeel is elegant and bright, followed by an extended citrus-inspired finish.

The Growing Season

The 2021 vintage in Lake County is showing remarkable potential, with its exceptional quality and concentration of flavors. Spring growing conditions, in our high-elevation AVA, prompted bud break a week earlier than average, raising the risk of frost. While our fruit set was decreased, due to the persistent drought, we harvested with near perfect temperatures in August. We began picking about a



week earlier than normal and once the fruit began coming in it was clear that the quality was going to be some of the best in recent memory. Low winter rainfall contributed to a lighter-than-average crop, but the loose bunched clusters, facilitated steady ripening, which in turn led to particularly balanced and flavorful grapes. The defining factor for the '21 harvest was the degree of concentration observed when we harvested clusters with the same number of berries, but only ½ of their normal weight. This vintage will be remembered for its flavorful wines, developing additional complexity over time.

Winemaking

The fruit for our Chardonnay was hand picked at 21.5° Brix and whole cluster pressed. This wine is 100% Chardonnay, coming from 30-year-old, CCOF certified Organic vines near Lakeport – one of the coldest sites in Lake County. For this offering, our winemakers utilized classic *Chablisienne* type winemaking methods, with 2/3 of the fruit being fermented in stainless steel tanks and the remaining 1/3 barrel fermented in neutral oak. The wine was lees stirred to develop depth, then chilled to prevent the malolactic fermentation.

The Land

The Dancing Crow Chardonnay comes from the west side of the Lake County AVA, near the town of Lakeport. At an elevation of only 1,350', these vines are planted in a low-lying area, compared to surrounding vineyards. This is one of the coolest microclimates in the county – making it ideal for growing Chardonnay grapes. During summer months, Lake County sees hot daytime temperatures; yet, the vines are able to recover from the heat of the day and respire at night due to the evening's cool coastal breezes, which are pulled across the Mayacamas mountain range by the vast size of Clear Lake. This distinctive combination of factors (1350 ft. elevation, cool microclimate, hot days and cold nights) all work in concert to create a unique terroir that allows us to emulate the beautiful Chardonnays of Chablis at 13% alcohol – highlighting floral & pome fruit flavors with a refreshingly bright acidity.

Varietals: 100% Chardonnay
Aging: 3 mo. Stainless Steel & Neutral Oak
Alcohol: 13%

Appellations: 100% Lake County
pH: 3.43
Acidity: 7.2 g/L