

KUMEU RIVER

2008 Estate Chardonnay



Vineyards

For the 2008 Estate Chardonnay, Kumeu River carefully selected only the very best grapes from six sites with vines ranging in age from 11 to 16 years. The vineyards have a primarily northern exposure with clay soil. The clonal mix includes 15, 121, 124, 131, 95, 8021 and 15.

Vintage Notes

2008 in Kumeu was one of the best, brightest and warmest summers in memory. Normally temperatures max out at about 28 degrees Celsius (82 degrees Fahrenheit), but there were a couple of days where the mercury tipped 30 degrees Celsius (86 degrees Fahrenheit). The hot weather sped up ripening, and the vineyards were on track for not only an early harvest, but a superb one as well. As can be the nature of the terrain, the weather changed briefly a few weeks before vintage, and there were a few days of northeasterly winds bearing warm, wet air from the Pacific. The drizzly rain it contained (the French call it "English Rain") introduced unwelcome botrytis infections throughout the vineyard. Fortunately, this weather pattern was short-lived, and the ensuing sunny autumnal weather soon dried out the vines, but the botrytis remained. During harvest, the fruit was hand-sorted to remove the botrytis-infected grapes and ensure only the highest-quality fruit was taken to the winery.

Technical Information

Varietal Composition: 100% Chardonnay

Vinification: Whole-bunch pressed
Cold-settled
Indigenous yeast fermentation
100% barrel fermentation (20% new)
100% malolactic fermentation
Aged 11 months on lees in 20% new, 80%
1-5-year-old 225-liter/60-gallon French oak

Production: 7,000 cases (12/750ml)

Cases Imported: 2,000

Alcohol: 13.5%

Tasting Notes

The 2008 Estate Chardonnay displays honey and Golden Queen peach characters combined with a hint of hazelnut typical of this wine. The rich, silky texture and length of flavor are distinct characteristics that Kumeu River expects to see from the Estate Chardonnay. Because of the ripeness of the vintage, the 2008 is undoubtedly delicious enough to drink now; however, experience with vintages such as this indicates that the wine will benefit from two to five years of bottle age.

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