



# NEYERS

## CHARDONNAY

304

Sonoma County

2017



### A CALIFORNIA WINEMAKER LOOKS AT CHABLIS

“A few years ago, Tadeo Borchardt accompanied me on one of my regular trips to France, and we arranged a visit in Chablis with my favorite winemaker there, Roland Lavantureux. The tasting was a career turner for both of us, as we moved through wine after wine, each bursting with bright flavors, crisp acidity, and an aftertaste of refreshing minerality. Later that day, we made our plan to produce a bottling of Chardonnay with no oak contact. First, we needed a source for the grapes.

Paul Larson’s family has been growing grapes in the Carneros District of Sonoma County for over a century, and Paul has a parcel that is thought to be the southern-most Chardonnay vineyard in Sonoma County. That proximity to the Bay makes it one of the coldest grape-growing spots in northern California. Moreover, many of the vines are in the bed of what used to be a large creek, so the soil is rocky, with a deep gravel deposit. Those two factors—cold climate and rocky soil—make the vineyard particularly attractive for a Chablis-style Chardonnay, as the combination of high natural acidity with strong minerality are two elements we look for in classic Chablis. We arranged to buy the grapes. That fall, the weather at Larson’s vineyard was so chilly that these were the last grapes we harvested.

We whole-cluster pressed the fruit, and then fermented the juice, relying only on the yeast naturally trapped on the skin of the grapes. It was fermented entirely in stainless steel tanks which are produced from what the industry refers to as Grade ‘304’ Stainless, a reference to the high percentage of Nickel and Chromium used in its production. After the fermentation started, we began to circulate the new wine over the top of the tank in order to extend the contact with the yeast lees. After two months or so of slowly fermenting in the Stainless ‘304’ tank, the wine was dry. We then chilled the wine, and by late February, it was stable, relatively clear, and beginning to taste delicious. We filtered and bottled it later that week.

Our Chardonnay ‘304’ is fresh and crisp, low in alcohol and delicately flavored. The gravelly soil adds the expected mineral component. It’s a wine that is easy to drink, loaded with character, and enormously satisfying. We grabbed a bottle off of the line and enjoyed it with one of my favorite dishes, Barbara’s Shredded Chicken salad, served open-face on an Acme Bakery Sourdough baguette.” –Bruce Neyers

ORIGIN: Sonoma County

BARREL PROGRAM: Stainless steel and concrete

COMPOSITION: 100% Chardonnay

CASES PRODUCED: 4,200

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