



## CHATEAU MONTELENA

ESTABLISHED 1882

# 2022 Napa Valley Chardonnay

### Notes from the Winemaker, Matt Crafton

#### INTRODUCTION

Precision in winemaking (and in life) requires intent and purpose. Removing notions of how things *should be* allows us to see things truly as they are. Moreover, the ability to be entirely honest with each vintage enables the creative freedom necessary for both development and true expression. Montelena Chardonnay does not have a *style*. What it has is the dual-purpose of vintage and vineyard expression and our meticulous intent to deliver on both.

#### VINTAGE WEATHER

After a chilly, early start to the growing season, we successfully reached spring with a generous crop and without frost damage. Summer arrived early but was mostly benign aside from a few hot days in July. That said, the lingering effects of the drought required even more consideration of soil moisture and vine health. While the valley did experience a heavy shot of heat around Labor Day, the vast majority of the Chardonnay crop had been harvested ahead of time. The remaining fruit exhibited more “ripe” characteristics, adding greater complexity to the finished wine.

#### NOSE

There’s tremendous purity on the nose of this wine. At the same time, it’s also quite intense. Peach, apricot and kiwi drive an abundance of ripeness, which cascades into fresh cut flowers, orange blossom and cantaloupe.

#### PALATE

The citrus really comes to life here as mandarin, Meyer lemon and finally lemon verbena. While green apple, which is typically quite pronounced in Montelena wines, is somewhat overshadowed by the opulence of other flavors, I would expect it to become more prominent over time. Moreover, the texture is still angular and somewhat tight, which isn’t surprising given the wine’s youth. However, there’s certainly plenty to look forward to with notes of graham cracker, cinnamon and toast lingering beneath the surface.

#### FINISH

The finish initially leans into d’Anjou pear with some additional baking spice. It slowly transitions back to apple but more as cider than fresh cut. The citrus also persists as lemon zest and there’s a touch of peppery ginger as punctuation. While still predominantly linear, the finish should develop in breadth and gravity in coming years.

### Technical Information

#### HARVEST DATES

August 20 – September 7

#### ALCOHOL

13.8%

#### BLEND

100% Chardonnay

#### BARREL AGING

10 months in French oak;  
25% new

#### BOTTLING DATES

July 11 – July 27, 2023

#### WINEMAKER

Matt Crafton