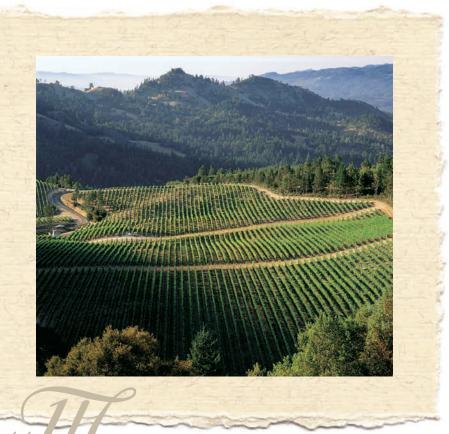
## 2012 Belle Côte Estate Chardonnay vineyard and winemaker notes



ountain vineyards, classical winemaking, limited production"



## BELLE CÔTE VINEYARD

Peter Michael Estate High above KnightsValley Eastern Sonoma County

Planted: 1990 Chardonnay clonal selections: See 33¼3%, Old Wente 33¼3%, Rued 33¼3% Elevation: 1,700–1,800 feet Soil: Volcanic-origin, Rhyolite Exposure: South–southeast

## 2012 Belle Côte

SingleVineyard Estate Chardonnay





lassic and well-balanced only begins to explain the beauty of the 2012 vintage. Conditions were optimal with ideal spring bud break, even flowering and fruit set, and plenty of warm, long summer days. A few small heat spikes in September and October brought great concentration and color to the fruit. A long Indian summer of mild temperatures and sunny days was an important factor in the ripening process. We thinned the crop rigorously, keeping only the most perfect clusters. The vineyard crew was able to harvest when the fruit had reached perfect balance and ripeness levels. The 2012 Chardonnay vintage displays exceptional structure and quality.

WINEGROWING As the oldest of four Peter Michael estate Chardonnay vineyards, NOTES Belle Côte exemplifies how consistently these mountain vineyard sites produce exceptionally high quality Chardonnay. Given the naturally cool climate of the vineyard's high elevation, and the fact that the site is sheltered from the hot afternoon sun by its southeastern exposure and a stand of trees on its western border, the vines are exceptionally slow to ripen. For this site, the growing season typically extends into October (two to three weeks longer than most Chardonnay vineyards in Napa and Sonoma counties).

WINEMAKER'S Ver TASTING cit NOTES mi

Very intense and powerfully hedonistic aromas of lychee nut, citrus, rose petal and orange blossom, with a background of mineral, bergamot orange, candied orange, yellow peach, nutmeg, nougat, whole nut and toasted almond. The rich seamless palate is weighty in the mouth and very creamy. Notes of brioche, saffron and pain grillé coupled with natural acidity and minerals complete the mouth feel. The wine will continue to develop for at least two decades.

## WINEHarvested: September 29 – October 8, 2012INFORMATION100% naturally fermented using native yeasts<br/>100% barrel fermented in French oak from artisan coopers<br/>Barrel aged sur lies 11 months with weekly bâtonnage<br/>Bottled unfined and unfiltered February 1, 2014<br/>Alcohol: 15.6 %<br/>Release Date: April 1, 2014

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