

2012 BELLE CÔTE ESTATE CHARDONNAY
VINEYARD AND WINEMAKER NOTES



*“Mountain
vineyards,
classical
winemaking,
limited
production”*



PETER MICHAEL
WINERY

BELLE CÔTE VINEYARD

*Peter Michael Estate
High above Knights Valley
Eastern Sonoma County*

Planted: 1990

Chardonnay clonal selections:

See 33⅓%,

Old Wente 33⅓%,

Rued 33⅓%

Elevation: 1,700–1,800 feet

Soil: Volcanic-origin,

Rhyolite

Exposure: South–southeast

2012
BELLE CÔTE

Single Vineyard
Estate Chardonnay



VINTAGE
NOTES

Classic 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
NOTES

As the oldest of four Peter Michael estate Chardonnay vineyards, 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 south-eastern 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
TASTING
NOTES

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.

WINE
INFORMATION

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