

Kestrel Vintners

2007 Estate Old Vine Chardonnay



Bursting with lemon zest, green apple, toffee, vanilla, apricots, dried herbs, and a delicate floral note.

The Vintage

During the 2007 growing season we experienced a long warm summer. Cooler October temperatures helped maintain acidity and created wine with outstanding structure and balance. Estates who focused special attention on growing quality fruit, by keeping crop levels low (below 4 tons/acre) and monitoring water to control growth and vigor, were once again rewarded with outstanding quality.

The Vineyard

One hundred percent of our Chardonnay comes from our own Kestrel View Estate Vineyard. The Chardonnay vines were planted in 1972 and are the oldest Chardonnay vines in the state of Washington. Our vineyard is also unique in that the Chardonnay is the "Wente" clone and represents one of only a few Wente clone Chardonnay vineyards in the state. The Wente clone is known for being very stingy from a quantity standpoint. In other words, it is a "shy bearing" clone of Chardonnay. Our "Old Vine" Wente Chardonnay naturally yields 2.25 to 2.75 tons per acre; this is half of what other clones will naturally produce. The Wente clone also produces a different flavor and aroma profile. While still showing pear, honeysuckle, citrus and floral notes like the "other" Chardonnay clone, the Wente clone offers mineral, hints of nutmeg, clove and a slight Muscat note for good measure.

The Winemaking

All our fruit was hand picked, sorted, then gently whole cluster pressed. Many wineries press the grapes in hopes of achieving a yield of 170 to 180 gallons of juice per ton. We stop pressing in the 135 to 145 gallon per ton range. Higher pressures result in a juice possessing a bitterness which will ultimately need to be "fined" out of the wine. Better to return that portion of juice to the vineyard than diminish a wine's potential by over processing. Upon settling for two days, the clear juice was racked to French oak barrels where it was fermented with three wild yeast strains. The young wine was aged on the yeast sediment for ten months, where it underwent the process of Sur Lie, stirring bi-weekly. It was filtered upon bottling.

Winemaker Notes

The 2007 Kestrel Chardonnay is a powerful and particularly well balanced Chardonnay. The wine boasts a rich mineral element, is full bodied, and bursting with lemon zest, green apple, toffee, vanilla, honey, apricots, dried herbs and a delicate floral note. I feel that this is a particularly exceptional and unusual Chardonnay. The combination of the wild yeast strains, the Wente Clone, and the manner in which it was fermented and cared for create a complex wine with many layers. As the layers unfold you will see the breadth of this wine, and I hope find a whole new appreciation for Chardonnay as I have.

PH: 3.32 Acidity: 7.4 % Alcohol: 13.9% Residual Sugar: 0.3%

Blend: 100% Old Vine Chardonnay from Kestrel View Estate

Cases produced: 692

Release Date: September 2008

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Goat Cheese Soufflés In Phyllo Cups with Frisee Salad

Ingredients

For phyllo cups

6 (17-by 12-inch) phyllo sheets
1/4 cup unsalted butter, melted

For soufflé filling

2 T. unsalted butter
2 T. all-purpose flour
3/4 cup whole milk
2 T. Dijon mustard
2 large eggs separated
1/2 cup finely grated
Parmigiano-Reggiano
2/3 cup soft mild goat
cheese crumpled

For salad

1 1/2 T. cider vinegar
1 1/2 T. Dijon mustard
1/4 T. salt
5 T. extra-virgin olive oil
8 cups frisee in bite size pieces
6 radishes cut in thin wedges
3 T. chopped fresh chives

Preparation

Make cups: Pre-heat oven to 375°F.

Place all 6 sheets on a work surface and brush with melted butter. Place sheets atop one another three layers high, to make two stacks. Cut each stack into 6 (4 1/2-inch) squares with sharp knife, trimming sides as needed.

Line each of 12 muffin cups with a square. You will have four extra incase of breakage. Bake cups in middle of oven until golden, about 8 minutes, then cool completely in pan on a rack.

Make filling: Increase oven temperature to 400°F.

While cups are cooling, melt butter in a 3-quart heavy saucepan over moderately low heat, then whisk in flour. Cook roux, whisking, 3 minutes. Add milk in a stream, whisking, and bring to a boil, whisking. Reduce heat and simmer, whisking occasionally, 5 minutes. Remove from heat and whisk in mustard, yolks, and 1/4 cup Parmigiano-Reggiano until combined, then fold in goat cheese.

Beat egg whites in a large bowl with an electric mixer until they just hold stiff peaks. Fold one third of whites into sauce to lighten, then fold in remaining whites gently but thoroughly.

Spoon batter into 8 phyllo cups and sprinkle with remaining Parmigiano-Reggiano. Bake in middle of oven until soufflés are puffed and golden, about 15 minutes.

Make salad while soufflés bake:

Whisk together oil, vinegar, mustard, and salt in a bowl until emulsified.

Just before soufflés are ready, toss frisée and radishes in a large bowl with just enough dressing to coat.

Mound salad onto 8 plates and sprinkle with chives, then make a small nest in center of each.

Place a soufflé cup in each salad and serve immediately.

Cooks' notes: Phyllo cups can be made 1 day ahead and kept in pan, carefully wrapped in plastic wrap, at room temperature.

Makes 8 servings

Pair with Kestrel Vintners Old Vine Chardonnay