



2004 Faux Chablis

I don't like what California Chardonnay has become. Indeed, in California-based competitions, my fellow judges often trim from the pack (as "atypical") all but the fat shallow buttery toast bombs they have resigned themselves to expect.

In homage to the true Chablis of Bourgogne, our Napa knock-off imitates its lemon blossom aromas, firm structure, and mineral depth. The living soil Steve Krebs maintains in this beautifully balanced vineyard imparts to the finish a mineral electricity rarely seen in California whites. Bâtonnage sur lies and restrained use of well-seasoned oak impart rich structure, aromatic complexity and reductive strength that invite a few years' cellaring. This wine can be expected to gain aromatic openness and mid-palate richness over the next few years and should be a reasonable candidate for extended cellaring.

Misappropriation of European place names is particularly disgraceful when used to embellish wines of low stature and unsuitable style. Our French friends find wry humor in America's only pure-Chardonnay "chablis."

– CLARK SMITH, WINEMAKER

My goal is to produce skillfully crafted wines that explore winemaking possibilities beyond the contemporary mainstream.

For more details, visit www.grapecraft.com

Vineyard Location: Student Vineyard
Napa Valley College
(south Napa town)

Harvest Date: 29 September 2004

Harvest Sugar: 24.8 Brix

Fermentation techniques:
Prise de Mousse yeast
Fermentation on untoasted Alliers oak

Elevage details:
Malolactic fermentation suppressed
Weekly bâtonnage six months
Alcohol adjusted via recombinatory
distillation of reverse osmosis permeate
to "sweet spot" at 12.9 %
TA 6.8 g/L, pH 3.48 at bottling

168 cases produced