



CHARDONNAY Alisos Vineyard SANTA BARBARA COUNTY, 2004

When many people think of Chardonnay, they think of French or Californian wines. Chardonnay is the most widely sold white wine in the world, and that may be because of the diversity of the grape and the wines produced from it. But to those in the know, there is also a classic style of Chardonnay from Italy, where the grape has been grown for over 100 years in the Friuli region. Chrystal has long been interested in producing a wine in the Friulian style - where they produce an austere and mineral based Chardonnay.

The grapes are from the famed Alisos Vineyard outside of the hamlet of Los Alamos, between Santa Ynez and Santa Maria. Although skeptics thought she was picking too early, Chrystal prevailed and brought the fruit in at 22 Brix, because she wanted not only the elegant flavor profile of the grape, but also a balance between pH and acidity. The grapes were hand-harvested at night and delivered to the winery at dawn's early light.

Made in the classic Palmina style, the grapes were whole cluster pressed – both to have minimal skin contact and also to extract a little bit of the soft tannins from the stems – and then immediately placed into stainless steel to prevent any oxidation. Left overnight to cold settle, the juice was then brought to cellar temperature where it was inoculated with yeast and completed primary fermentation. Malo-lactic fermentation was inhibited to preserve the fruit profile of the Chardonnay grape. Placed into four stainless steel drums and one neutral French Oak barrel, the wine was then bottled in March of 2005.

“Delightful”. This wine could reverse the opinion of many who have taken up the “Anything But Chardonnay” mantra. It has a light straw color and a beautiful sharpness and clarity. Fresh fruit aromas abound on the nose – with lemon zest and a hint of the clean smell of the sea. The first sip reveals a soft and oily mouthfeel, illuminating orange blossom, golden delicious apples and lemon-lime tart. A hint of fig and white peach then lead to the reminiscence of “sea perfumes” – that freshness of a day at the shore.

The 2004 Botasea Chardonnay is named after Valter Scarbolo's daughter Lara. The Scarbolo's have become the Clifton's adopted family in Friuli, teaching them much about the area, Italian family life, the dialect, cooking –everything Friulian! When Chrystal and Steve decided to get married in Friuli, the Scarbolos jumped in and helped with the planning. Lara was a flower girl and more to Chrystal, and since she is a blonde and elegant Friulian girl who means a lot to the Cliftons, it is only fitting that this wine bears her name.

We love to pair this wine with a classic Friulian Frico. Only 60 cases produced.