

BOTASEA

2005 Chardonnay, LARA
Santa Barbara County

Chardonnay is known the world over, although most would not think of an Italian Chardonnay when browsing a wine list. The thin-skinned grape, however, has been one of the renowned white grapes of the Friuli region of Italy for well over 100 years. Rather than the bold and rich styles of Chardonnay from other regions, Friulian Chardonnays are austere and focused. Chrystal has long been interested in producing a Chardonnay in this style and 2005 is the second vintage of this wine, named *Lara*.



The 2005 Lara is an elegant wine in all sense of the word. A pale, straw color with a brilliant clarity announces that the wine is not your ordinary Chardonnay. Citrusy notes combine with a seashore type of minerality on the nose, which are mirrored on the palate. Crisp and pure with a wonderful balance of racy acids and flavorful fruit, the wine first enchants with lemony notes married with key lime, which are then joined by the uniqueness of tangelo. A hint of almond and the briny remembrance of sea air are present on the persistent and zingy finish. Delightful on its own as an aperitif, this wine shines as part of a summer-time meal replete with fresh fruits and vegetables. As with all Palmina wines, it was conceived to be “an extension of the plate”.

Bottled under Palmina’s Botasea label, the Chardonnay grapes are grown for Chrystal at the Alisos Vineyard, a vineyard that strategically lies between the Santa Maria and Santa Ynez valleys. The maritime influence from the nearby Pacific ocean and the west-east transverse nature of the two valleys produces a microclimate wherein the Chardonnay can ripen at lower brix (sugar) levels and provide Chrystal with grapes that are balanced and have elegant flavors. Alisos Vineyard managers Wayne and Loren Colahan harvest the grapes in the very early hours of the morning (3:00 - 4:00 a.m.) so that they are crisp and cold upon delivery to the winery.

The grapes are vinified in a manner that encourages the essence of the grape to shine. Whole cluster pressed to minimize skin contact and extract just a hint of intrigue from the stems, the juice is immediately placed into stainless steel tanks. After a few days of settling, the juice is racked off the initial sediment and inoculated with yeast to begin a very slow, cold fermentation. Malo-lactic fermentation is prevented. This time-intensive method of fermentation encourages the pure essence of the grape, the vineyard and the vintage to shine through. The wine was bottled in the early Spring of 2006 and received four months of bottle aging prior to release. Only 112 cases produced.

The 2005 Botasea Chardonnay is named after Valter Scarbolo’s daughter Lara. The Scarbolos have become the Clifton’s adopted family in Friuli, teaching them much about the area, Italian family life, the dialect, wine-growing, cooking - everything Friulian! When Chrystal and Steve married in Friuli, Lara was a flower girl and more to Chrystal. And since she is a beautiful blonde and elegant Friulian girl that means a lot to the Clifton’s, it is only fitting that this wine bears her name.



PALMINA

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