



2016 “HOMESTEAD” CHARDONNAY

NAPA VALLEY

Kuleto is one of the most complex and diverse wine producing properties in the world. Located in the volcanic mountains of eastern Napa our estate features 781 total acres and 82.9 acres of vines perched along ridges and clinging to steep hillsides. Our soils, exposures, elevation changes and sub-climates are so complex that we've delineated our property into more than 100 micro-blocks. Each of these tiny plots is treated as an individual vineyard with varieties, clones, rootstocks, density, trellising and farming methods tailored specifically to the site.

For winemaker Gio Verdejo, there is a mutual understanding that all but a small percentage of the winemaker's work is done in the vineyard. Keeping the vineyard's serpentine twists and exposures in mind, the best-suited varieties for each block have been selected. Working with the land, not against it, the individually terraced lots are not oriented to one central direction, but instead are planted to maximize the benefits of their natural location.

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Vintage 2016 gave us yet another beautiful vintage in the Napa Valley. This is following the fabulous vintages of 2012-2015. Marked by a few late-season heat spells, the wines are as opulent as the 2012s, with the concentration of the 2014s.

We've been playing with methods to build power and flavor into our Chardonnays for years now – mostly by employing old-fashioned methods of soaking the crushed fruit on the stems for hours or days or fermenting a portion of the fruit partially or to complete dryness with skins and stems. Continuing with the method of skin and stem contact 'perfected' in 2014 and 2015, we expanded the amount of wine in direct contact with stems in 2016 but pressed that portion off when very little alcohol had been created (at 20 Brix, the alcohol might be as little as 2%). This gave us the tannin grip we were looking for, the stone fruit flavor in the mid-palate, and, whether it was the time on the skins, seeds, and stems or not, a pleasing savory quality in the finish. In many whites, the flavor doesn't hit you until the texture has registered. The 2016 is remarkable with its simultaneous attack of juicy, fruity flavors and structure as soon as it hits your palate. It is both intensely fresh and immensely satisfying in terms of depth.

TECHNICAL DATA

Varietal Composition 100% Estate Chardonnay
30% Fermented to 20 Brix on skins and stems prior to pressing
20% Skin soaked prior to pressing
50% Whole cluster pressed

Vineyard Kuleto Estate, 1100 - 1250 feet elevation | Alcohol 14.5%

Malolactic Fermentation - Partial ML in new barrels only

Aging 100% barrel fermented, 18 months in 30% new French oak | pH 3.5 | TA 6.2 g/L

Cases Produced 220 (750 ml)