



**Little Giant
2011 Chardonnay
Carneros-Napa Valley**

Harvest Date: October 10th, 2011
Brix at Harvest: 23.6
Finished pH: 3.44
Finished TA: 0.70 g/100 ml
Vineyard Location: Las Amigas Road, Napa-Carneros
Blend: 100% Chardonnay
Production: 147 cases 750 ml

History: The “Little Giant” on the label is a tribute to the Newfoundland breed. These dogs are sturdy, loyal little giants that have been bred as a working dog on the eastern seaboard. Legend has it that these dogs were brought to sea and used to pull sailors back to the ship if they fell overboard in storms. In addition, they were known to actually tow small ships to shore by putting the aft lines in their mouths and swimming. Their thick, double coat, webbed feet and muscular frame aid in these endeavors while swimming in the icy, Northern Atlantic waters. Newfoundlands and winemaking are two passions of owner/winemaker Chris Dearden. He has lived and produced fine wines in Napa Valley since 1986. A trained enologist from UC Davis, with an MBA from the Haas School of Business at UC Berkeley, Dearden has pursued single vineyard wines for several Napa Valley clients and beginning in 2005, for his own Deardenwines labels. His Cabernets, Chardonnays and Italian varietals have garnered both critical and consumer acclaim since 1995. Chris lives in Napa with his wife, two children, two Newfoundlands and a chocolate lab.

Vintage/Winemaking: 2011 will be remembered as the “winemakers” vintage in California. The long, cool growing season continued into the fall harvest season. Slow accumulation of sugars and flavors were the norm for this vintage and quantities were slightly down from normal. After a long period of waiting for the fruit to become perfectly ripe, the grapes were picked after a slight downpour washed the dust off of the fruit on October 10th. The fruit was rushed to the winery and after diligent sorting, poured as whole clusters in the press. The gentle extraction of the juice was cold settled for 24 hours and then moved to a combination of neutral (70%) and new (30%) French oak barrels where it fermented for 24 days before going dry. The barrels were then stirred weekly for 11 months prior to bottling on September 5th, 2012. The vineyard is located on a 6 acre parcel on Las Amigas Road in the heart of the Napa-Carneros region of Napa Valley. It is the coolest climate area in the Napa Valley and is the birthplace of some of the finest Chardonnays and Pinot noirs produced anywhere in the world.

Tasting Notes: Essence of star jasmine, honey and citrus are hallmarks of this fine Chardonnay. It is round and ripe in the mouth, but has great acidity and fruit to make it a great wine to pair with foods from Dungeness Crab to Alaskan Halibut and Grilled Chicken. It can also be enjoyed as an aperitif or by itself with friends and family. It will age well for three to five years and continue to develop the honey-apricot complex over time. Enjoy with family and friends and all occasions both grand and humble.

Chris & Paige Dearden-Proprietors

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