



Sleeping Giant

**2014 Chardonnay
“Las Amigas Partners Vineyard”
Carneros-Napa Valley**

Harvest Date: September 9th, 2014
Brix at Harvest: 24.9
Finished pH: 3.56
Finished TA: 0.61 g/100 ml
Vineyard Location: Las Amigas Partners Vineyard, Napa-Carneros
Blend: 100% Chardonnay
Production: 110 cases of 750 ml
Vineyard Manager: Sam Turner

History: The “Sleeping Giant” is the section of mountain range of the Mayacamas that runs from the Northern edge of Mount Veeder in Napa almost up to the Yountville Veterans Home. It becomes the focal point of conversation as the sun sets on the Western hills. Chris Dearden 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 Shibumi Knoll, and V Madrone St. Helena and Chanticleer in Yountville. His Cabernets, Chardonnays and Italian varietals have garnered both critical and consumer acclaim since 1995.

Harvest Notes: 2014 was excellent for the eight-year old Las Amigas Vineyard, planted to the “Old Wente” clone of Chardonnay in 2006. Old Wente clone Chardonnay is a poor producer, but an incredibly flavorful grape to make wine with and is prized for the highest quality. The vintage was early, moderate and without excessive swings in temperature. Early rains in February and March were just what was needed to avoid the drought having adverse effects on the crop. Small berries were welcomed and mostly a result of the dry winter preceding the growing season. The fruit was harvested on a foggy, and cool early fall day, and was picked at the perfect flavor balance.

Winemaking: Hand harvested fruit is whole cluster pressed, chilled, racked to French oak barrels, where the introduction of “native” or “indigenous” yeast is the key element to winemaking. After a long, cool fermentation that sometimes lasts two months, the wine is stirred weekly to aid in clarification, and add textural and aromatic components to the wine. After approximately 16 months in barrel, the wine is bottled without fining or excessive filtration. These low yielding vines create wines that make this highest expression of Chardonnay.

This is the fifth vintage of Sleeping Giant from our estate vineyard and it has garnered critical and consumer acclaim for each vintage produced. It is characterized by lemon sorbet, mandarin zest, vanilla bean, complex aromatics of sandalwood, cinnamon and lightly roasted hazelnuts. The entry is clean, full on the palate and has a long, creamy finish lasting upwards of one minute. It will accompany Maine Lobster, Fettucine Alfredo, California Gold cheese and lemon tarts. The natural acidity will allow it to age well for a decade, but enjoy within the next 2-4 years for peak fruit and enjoyment.