

MER SOLEIL

2020 Reserve Chardonnay *Santa Lucia Highlands*

Tasting Notes: A soft golden color, this wine features bright scents of lemon crumb bars and honeydew, with a hint of apricot, toasted oak and the evocative trace of a freshly struck match. Entry on the palate is round and robust, lending a richness to the fruit. At the same time, a zing of acidity hits the sides of the tongue, maintaining the liveliness of citrus and melon. This dance of vibrancy and intensity carries over to the finish, as honeydew and apricot trail off in silky smoothness.

Charlie Wagner Owner and Winemaker



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A place unlike any other

Mer Soleil began in the late 1980s, with a drive down to California's central coast in search of ideal conditions to plant Chardonnay. We were drawn in by the singular growing conditions of the Santa Lucia Highlands, an exceptional wine region about 40 minutes south from Monterey. Planting our first grapes on land previously dedicated to row crops and cattle grazing, we increased our vineyard little by little to achieve the highest quality. The Santa Lucia Highlands is one of America's true farming communities, and we feel privileged to be part of it.

A true expression of the Santa Lucia Highlands

Just like the weather where it is made, Mer Soleil Chardonnay is a dramatic and artful combination. Creamy yet fresh, the wine is balanced by a lively acidity and bright citrus. Fermentation and aging take place in French oak barrels for about 11 months, using a mix of new and used for just the right amount of oak integration. Only a portion of the wine goes through malolactic fermentation to ensure a firm acidity along with a round mouth feel. We also practice hand stirring of the barrels to impart a creamy texture.

Moody weather creates expressive wine

The name Mer Soleil stems from the two forces of nature, the sea and sun, that leave their imprint on this wine. Bearing the influence of Monterey Bay, the Santa Lucia Highlands has a consistent weather pattern of morning fog, bright sunshine and afternoon breezes that turn into howling gusts of wind. This combination provides natural cooling to the sundrenched days, leading to an extended growing season. As a result, grapes stay on the vine longer, and we can make Chardonnay with heightened complexity, as well as intense aromas and flavors.