



Far Niente produces critically acclaimed, estate bottled Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon wines that are renowned for their consistent house style and ability to evolve with extended age.



The Napa Valley Wine Estate

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Far Niente

1996 Estate Bottled Chardonnay

Napa Valley

The 1996 harvest required patience due to periods of warm weather followed by cooling that made ripening difficult to predict. The 1996 growing conditions were very nice, but weather factors during bud formation and set resulted in lower than normal yields for the third year in a row. The rest of the growing season slowly ripened the fruit to peak maturity with the harvest starting in early September and continuing for three weeks.

The hand harvested grapes were brought to the winery in small bins and then sorted by hand to assure the finest quality. The fermentation began in temperature controlled stainless steel tanks, and was then racked into a high percentage of new French Burgundy Oak Barrels to complete the additional depth, complexity and texture. After approximately seven months of barrel aging, each wine was evaluated as part of the blend. Only those barrels that displayed both the quality and the "Far Niente style" were included in the blend which was lightly fined prior to bottling in the summer of 1997.

The 1996 Chardonnay is a classically structured wine that is both lush and round on the palate while displaying the typical intensity of fruit and spicy oak aromas that have become synonymous with Far Niente Chardonnay. While the finish is long and clean, the rich flavors will become increasingly full and complex with time. The 1996 Far Niente Chardonnay has excellent potential to age ten or more years.

Dirk Hampson
Director of Winemaking