

STAGLIN

FAMILY VINEYARD

2009 ESTATE CHARDONNAY

Rutherford, Napa Valley

<i>Release Date</i>	March 1, 2010
<i>Harvest Dates</i>	August 31-September 17, 2009
<i>Fermentation</i>	100% Barrel Fermentation
<i>Barrel Aging</i>	11 Months
<i>Oak</i>	100% French: 53% new, 47% used
<i>Blend</i>	100% Chardonnay
<i>Alcohol</i>	14.5%

Winemaker Tasting Notes

The 2009 Chardonnay season might be remembered as a mellow, easy, almost perfect year that avoided any extremity. A relatively mild, slightly dry winter was followed by heavier late winter/early spring rains than has been normal recently, allowing us to minimize irrigation and balance vine stress. Small heat waves and rainstorms in May and June caused some shatter, naturally limiting yields and allowing the vines to focus their ripening energy on the clusters that remained. The absence of the usual late-August heat wave allowed the grapes to continue ripening evenly without undue pressure or stress, developing ripe and mature flavors without excessive sugar accumulation right on through the brilliant September harvest. The grapes were picked in the cool early mornings to maintain their freshness, natural acidity and delicate flavors. We utilize traditional Burgundian winemaking techniques, while respecting the unique quality of the fruit our vineyard delivers. The grapes are hand sorted, whole cluster pressed and then barrel-fermented. Though we generally restrict it to preserve acidity and crispness, this year we again allowed a few lots to go through malo-lactic fermentation for some additional roundness and increased complexity. Finally, we aged this wine on its lees for eleven months with regular 'batonnage' during the first seven months.

The 2009 Chardonnay displays a pale, elemental gold color and opens with an ephemeral nose of white peaches, poached pears and citrus blossoms set amidst a mineral driven backdrop of wet slate and crushed rocks that leads to a focused, medium-bodied palate of honeyed peaches, citrus oil and white currants spiced by touches of vanilla and subtle oak. The impeccable balance of this wine allows it to drink deliciously now but will likely develop another layer of complexity if given some time.

