

Dancing Crow Vineyards

2022 Chardonnay – Lake County

Winemaker Sensory Impressions

There is a subtle beauty to Chardonnay that can sometimes be washed away by new oak, so we are excited to release our brand-new vintage of our Unoaked Chardonnay which showcases that beauty perfectly. Despite the heat spikes we were able to capture some of that subtle magic with aromas and flavors of Golden Delicious apples, Anjou pears, and Meyer lemons with a hint of lemongrass and agave on the finish. There was no oak aging, but it still has a beautiful richness to the palate that allows it to feel full, but the integrated acidity makes sure it never feels even the least bit heavy.

The Growing Season

The Lake County fruit exhibited excellent quality in 2022, with wines showing fresh, bright, and flavorful fruit characteristics. The growing season began with cool temperatures and a bit of rain in spring – and throughout the growing season – and temperatures remained cooler overall, which is more in line with the “normal” weather patterns

of the past vintages. Harvest began a few weeks later than recent years, but then moved briskly due to some hot days in September. There were a few cool days around mid-September and a little rain, but fruit flavors had already developed, with many vineyards at an ideal, slightly lower Brix level. Fortunately, we picked before a late harvest heat spike, but Lake County grapes deal with heat extremely well, due to their more resilient, high-altitude skins. Overall, crop size was larger than usual with the quality of fruit being on par with last year’s outstanding vintage.



Winemaking

This fruit was picked at night and pressed as soon as it got to the winery. It was fermented slowly and at a cold temperature in order to preserve its freshness while maintaining the delicately alluring aromas we love from Lake County fruit. While a small amount of malolactic fermentation occurred naturally during our primary fermentation, we stopped it as soon as the wine was dry. There it aged in stainless steel for 4 months on the lees until it was time for bottling. Some Semillon was added to round out the wine and add additional richness and texture.

The Land

The grapes for the Dancing Crow Chardonnay came from the west side of the Lake County AVA near the town of Lakeport at about 1350 ft. These vines were planted in a low spot compared to the surrounding vineyards and they sit in one of the coolest microclimates in the county – making it ideal for growing Chardonnay grapes. During summer months, Lake County sees hot daytime temperatures; yet the vines can recover from the heat of the day and respire in the evening due to cool coastal breezes pulled across the Mayacamas mountain range by the vast size of Clear Lake. This distinctive combination of factors (1350 ft. elevation, cool microclimate, hot days and cool nights) all work in concert to create a unique terroir that allows us to emulate the beautiful Chardonnays of Chablis at 12-13% alcohol – highlighting floral & pome fruit flavors with a refreshingly bright acidity.

Varietals: 78% Chardonnay, 22% Semillon	Appellation: Lake County CA
Aging: 4 mo. stainless steel	Acidity: 5.7 g/L
Alcohol: 12.5%	pH: 3.38

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