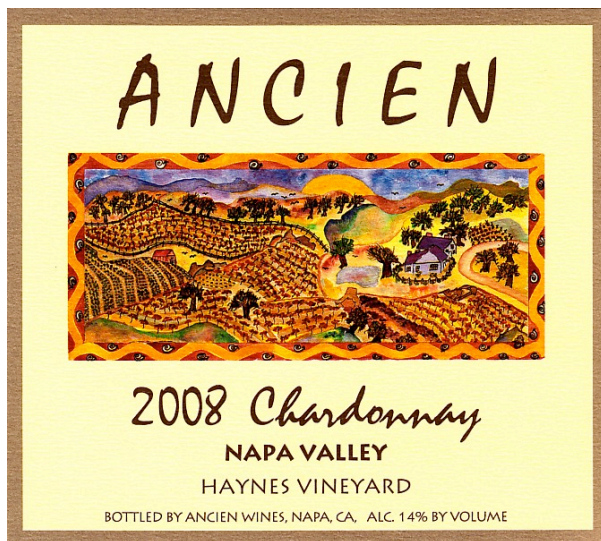


Ancien Wines

2008 Napa Valley Chardonnay
HAYNES VINEYARD



ABOUT THE VINEYARD...

This block of the Haynes Vineyard, located in a cool pocket of the southeastern Napa Valley, is a part of California wine-making history. Mt. George, the once-active volcano that coated this region with its characteristic layer of volcanic soils, looms to the north, and in the upper blocks of Haynes, original vines, planted in 1966 by Pat and Duncan Haynes, continue to produce balanced, fully-ripened Chardonnay, full of rich fruit flavors, an enthralling mineral component, and with extraordinary natural acidity. Fernando Delgado has lived on and managed the care for this vineyard since 1970. The vines are from an old Wente selection, yielding small berries and clusters and believed to have been first brought to California by Paul Masson from Louis Latour's Corton Charlemagne vineyard. The Haynes Vineyard, in a part of Napa little known to the world at large but oft-lauded by locals, attracted none other than the great Andre Tchelistcheff, who believed strongly in this vineyard's potential to make great wines and was an early winemaker on the property. Today, Delgado continues to custom prune each of these knobby, old, head-trained vines, expertly choosing the healthiest and strongest canes to support yet another vintage of profound Chardonnay.

ABOUT THE VINTAGE...

The difficulties of this vintage only helped to emphasize the beauty of established, healthy, old vine root systems. These old vines withstood the stress of the drought and produced healthy, ripe fruit full of concentrated flavor. The vines achieved this level of balance naturally, and what started out like difficult year resolved itself into a solid vintage, emphasizing concentrated fruit flavors and subtle tannins. This Chardonnay, as usual, came in after much of our Pinot Noir, with intense flavors and a high, balanced acidity. This combination has yielded a Chardonnay with tremendous structure and power, and a promise of even greater complexity with time in the bottle.

ABOUT THE WINE...

We pressed the grapes as whole clusters, settled and fermented entirely in French cooperage, mostly new. We fermented with native yeast, and allowed the wines an extensive aging period, *sur lees*, bottling after a total of 18 months in barrel. The bright and balanced acidity of the Haynes Chardonnay encouraged a complete malolactic fermentation, allowing us to bottle the wine unfiltered. 98 cases produced.

TASTING NOTES...

The nose begins with a subtle strand of straw, honey, and a softened whiff of cedar. The nose opens further to a rich melange of spicy melon, figs, dates, and meringue. The palate is immediately bright and fresh, and the mouth-feel is significant and rich, expansive and increasing in intensity. Crisp apple and ripe pear notes emerge from the full-bodied mid-palate, touched with tangerine and orange blossom. The finish is a lengthy and powerful amalgamation of ripe fruit, baking and holiday spices and mouth-filling minerality with a soft, tannic grip. The nose continues to evolve, revealing nuances throughout the finish. This is a Chardonnay worthy of cellaring.

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