

# Hanzell

## 2006 HANZELL VINEYARDS CHARDONNAY

*An elegant fragrance of chamomile, lemon and grapefruit pith, with darker tones of honey and bees wax followed by hazelnut and even savory elements of thyme and walnut. An even, mineral-dry, taut character to the wine when it first hits the tongue extends with a rounded fullness as it begins to develop in bottle.*

### VINTAGE AND WINEMAKING NOTES

The very limited production of our Chardonnay vines in 2006 was due to one cold night in March. There was a frost so severe that by early nightfall we could see the ice crystals settling on the cover crop between the vine rows. By the next morning the damage was complete; every bud that pushed a shoot had wilted and died. Older vines fared better than younger, as they seem to wake up slowly in the spring and hadn't yet fully extended their first leaves. But for some ten acres of vines planted on the estate after the late 90s, very little fruit would be harvested in 2006.

By the second half of July the weather had gone from one extreme to another, and for nine days it felt as if the earth was falling into the sun as temperatures soared well above normal, peaking at 114°F. Although it might be assumed that this would hasten ripening, in fact the heat essentially shut down the metabolic activity of the vines as they hunkered down to survive. And indeed, in August the temperature abated and we were provided a mild respite leading up to harvest. For nearly two weeks in September the slopes of Hanzell were embraced by a cool marine-layer that necessitated windshield wipers while traveling about in the mornings.

We introduced an advancement in the trellising of the old vines on the estate in 2006 – “Y” shaped cross arms with wires to support the growing shoots. The angle of the shoots with the new trellis provides shade to the clusters arrayed below and serves the same function an awning does for a window. It was a propitious year to introduce this change due to the extraordinary heat of July, and the quality of the fruit immediately reflected the improvement as the grapes avoided the scorching sun.

Our winemaking approach with the 2006 vintage honors the traditions Bob Sessions maintained during his thirty-year tenure but also conforms to the events of the growing season. With nearly one-third less fruit than the previous vintage, we barrel-fermented a larger fraction of the wine. This increased proportion relative to the tank-fermented portion has encouraged the development of a *sur-lie* character that has not played a prominent role in other vintages. Filled to one-third new French oak barrels in the traditional manner, the 2006 displays a purity of expression with minerality and honest varietal character that speaks to the singularity of Hanzell Vineyard's *terroir*. The signature is unmistakably ‘Hanzell’ but also shows the approach to the vintage, with the dramatically lower crop due to frost, the introduction of a new trellis, and finally in the winemaking choices.

— Michael Terrien, Winemaker

### TECHNICAL DETAILS

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- 3,253 CASES BOTTLED IN APRIL, 2008
- 50% BARREL-FERMENTED
- 18 MONTH ÉLEVAGE IN 1/3 NEW SIRUGUE BARRELS