

Au Bon Climat



2022

Chardonnay, Bien Nacido Vineyard

Bien Nacido Vineyard is the benchmark and crown jewel of the Santa Maria Valley AVA. One of the oldest, cool-climate vineyards in California, Bien Nacido Vineyard (Spanish for “Well Born”) has been an acclaimed source of world-class grapes since its founding in 1973. It is now acknowledged as among the elite vineyards of the world. Au Bon Climat has a special relationship with the vineyard. In addition to having our winery located on the property, we have custom blocks of fruit with long-term acreage contracts for quality hillside vines dating back to the early 1990s. Today, much of the fruit Au Bon Climat sources from this vineyard has been planted “exclusively” for us. For being instrumental in elevating Burgundian varietals on the Central Coast, we pay homage to Bien Nacido by designating this wine as part of our “Historic Vineyards Collection” on the label.

AT A GLANCE

APPELLATION:

Santa Maria Valley

VINEYARD:

Bien Nacido Vineyard

VARIETAL:

100% Chardonnay

COOPERAGE:

18 months, 100% new François Frères French oak barrels

HARVEST:

Four pickings throughout September, 2022

ALCOHOL: 13.5%

ACIDITY: 6.9 g/L

pH: 3.28

RESIDUAL SUGAR: <0

SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$40

Tasting Notes

The leaner body of this chardonnay allows the full profile of Bien Nacido fruit to be on display, showing notes of orchard fruit and delicate spice. There is a purity in the fruit flavors and aromatics, as layers of orange rind, yellow apple, and soft oak cut through clearly. Lighter notes of pecan, brioche, and honey provide a touch of rich complexity. Its refined minerality and balanced acidity provide a beautiful structure, making it a versatile and effortless pairing choice.

Food Pairings

Pair this chardonnay with something equally refined and bright. Dishes such as scallops seared in brown butter and toasted pecans, parmesan cheese, and thyme mushroom risotto, or herb-crusted roast chicken will pair beautifully.

From The Winemaker

Au Bon Climat has a long term contract for the best blocks of Chardonnay at Bien Nacido. Chardonnay grapes from legendary parcels such as “K” Block have been made into wine at Au Bon Climat since 1989. The original plantings date back to the founding of the ranch in 1973, but unique Chardonnay blocks have continued to be planted into the early 2000s. The 2022 vintage incorporates fruit from the “old vine” Chardonnay from blocks planted both in 1973 and the mid-90s, and from younger 2006 plantings that are showing great vibrancy in their prime years.

Harvested and handpicked throughout September, the fruit was slightly lower in sugar accumulation but the intensity and flavors indicated the grapes were ready. Burgundian winemaking practices were employed to make this wine complex and balanced. The grapes were whole cluster pressed, fermented in 100% new François Frères French oak barrels, completed malolactic fermentation, aged for 18 months, then bottled unfiltered.

Au Bon Climat & Clendenen Family Vineyards

+1 (805) 937-9801

AUBONCLIMAT.COM