

Au Bon Climat



2023

"Hildegard"

A wine named after an Empress has to be exquisite. Hildegard is a salute to the history of Burgundy and to Hildegard's husband, Charlemagne, the King of the Franks. During Charlemagne's rule in the early 800s the importance of wine and viticulture exploded. Since our first vintage in 1998, Hildegard is a Burgundian-minded, masterful blend of Pinot Gris, Pinot Blanc and Aligoté that is fermented and aged in new François Frères French oak barrels. By combining these three lesser known varietals, and giving it all the care it needs, the whole is more than the sum of its parts. The wine that seems more like a top-notch Chardonnay with a fruit driven profile. It is a special wine with its own unique character.

AT A GLANCE

APPELLATION:

Santa Maria Valley

VINEYARD:

Bien Nacido, Le Bon Climat

VARIETAL:

50% Pinot Gris,
45% Pinot Blanc, 5% Aligoté

COOPERAGE:

18 months, 100% new François
Frères French oak barrels

HARVEST:

August & September 2023
(multiple pickings)

ALCOHOL: 13.5%

ACIDITY: 6.2 g/L

pH: 3.4

RESIDUAL SUGAR: <0

SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$40

Tasting Notes

This wine opens with delicate aromas of candied lemon and white rose, followed by subtle hints of coconut milk, nectarine, and sandalwood. On the palate, fresh green apple and nectarine from the Pinot Gris meld seamlessly with the creaminess of French oak, while the salinity of Pinot Blanc and the bright acidity of Aligoté provide a crisp, structured finish.

Food Pairings

Hildegard is our white table wine, so we praise its ability to accompany many meals. This wine can hold its own against richer dishes such as a buttery lobster roll or a mushroom risotto. Hildegard equally shines with lighter meals like shrimp scampi, or really any lean fish.

From The Winemaker

Chardonnay was not always planted in the Corton Charlemagne wine region of France. During the reign of King Charlemagne it is believed Pinot Gris, Pinot Blanc and Aligoté were the main white varietals. This intrigued Jim Clendenen to a degree that in 1998, Au Bon Climat created its first Hildegard blend, named after Charlemagne's wife. A success from the start, we never stopped.

The 2023 growing season was a cooler one, with slow and consistent ripening throughout the season. Although the harvest for these grapes was three to four weeks later than our average, the grapes experienced great amounts of acid retention. Additionally the yields of white wine grapes in 2023 was particularly healthy, without sacrificing the intensity of the grapes.

Au Bon Climat & Clendenen Family Vineyards

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