

Au Bon Climat



2023

Wild Boy Chardonnay

Made just for export, the idea for “Wild Boy” Chardonnay came from our British importer, Berry Bros. & Rudd over 20 years ago when Jim Clendenen, the Wild Boy, was much wilder. After BBR selected a “tie-dyed” label with an outrageous caricature of Jim Clendenen, we had to fill the package with some Chardonnay worthy of the Wild Boy package. The wine is balanced, more fruit-restrained, and textured with depth and acidity—just the way our British customers prefer their Chardonnays.

Santa Barbara County has the climate and terroir that allows Au Bon Climat to consistently make balanced and lively Chardonnays year after year. Cool coastal vineyards with weather influenced by the Pacific Ocean just 10 miles away are ideal for producing Chardonnays with a Grand Cru character. After a year or so of bottle age, these Chardonnays develop into truly amazing wines with freshness, richness and power that will continue to handsomely age over the next decade.

AT A GLANCE

APPELLATION:

Santa Barbara County

VINEYARD:

multiple vineyards in Santa Maria and Los Alamos Valleys

VARIETAL:

100% Chardonnay

COOPERAGE:

10 months, neutral François Frères French oak

HARVEST: September 2023
(multiple pickings)

ALCOHOL: 13.5%

ACIDITY: 6.5 g/L

pH: 3.44

RESIDUAL SUGAR: <0

SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$30

Tasting Notes

The ‘Wild Boy’ appropriately features playful aromas of apricot, lemon meringue, and kiwi. Soft layers of spiced oak and crema weave through the palate, adding depth as the wine opens up. A crisp acidity and streak of limestone minerality give it a refreshing, structured feel. Light to medium-bodied, it finishes with a zesty kick of lemon-lime.

Food Pairings

This wine is a bit of a ‘wild’ card that can be paired with many tastes and profiles. Try with dishes such as a rosemary and garlic foccaccia flatbread, a miso-glazed salmon, or a mushroom risotto.

From The Winemaker

This wine is crafted with our English market in mind. We carefully assess all the different lots of Chardonnays to come up with a blend that highlights balance, good acidity, and a restrained fruitiness. The blend has been dominated by Bien Nacido and Los Alamos Vineyards fruit since the beginning. In the 2022 version we added some Rancho Real and North Canyon Vineyard, both in the Santa Maria Valley. These two vineyards continue to impress us and are featured in the 2023 vintage.

The grapes are all carefully handpicked, and sorted in the vineyard. After harvesting, the grapes are whole cluster pressed, and juice is quickly settled, chilled, and put to barrel. Barrel fermentation and malo-lactic fermentation are completed. The following summer the lots are blended and wine bottled. Sur lie barrel aging in somewhat neutral François Frères French oak barrels for 10 months provides an intriguing spice note of clove and nutmeg.

Au Bon Climat & Clendenen Family Vineyards

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