

THE
STEVEN KENT
WINERY

2005 “Merrillie” Chardonnay
LIVERMORE VALLEY

Displaying intensely rich aromas of buttered bread, pear, lemon zest, and hazelnuts, the 2005 Chardonnay, *Merrillie*, Livermore Valley is the seventh vintage of this wonderful white wine. Sourced this year from the Ernest Wente Vineyard about a ½ mile from the Winery, this Chardonnay was vinified in the same fashion as the 2004.

After pressing, the must was transferred to a stainless steel tank where it settled for about 48 hours prior to fermentation. The juice was then transferred to barrel where it underwent both primary and secondary (malo-lactic) fermentation. The wine was racked a number of times to aid in clarification during the course of its maturation and was bottled with minimal filtration.

In the mouth, *Merrillie* is a worthy successor to previous vintages in its full-throated richness and varied palette of flavors. Very silky on the mid-palate, the wine finishes with beautiful acidity. Only 824 cases of this wine were produced.

HISTORY

Merrillie is named for my paternal grandmother, and until recently, was the only white wine produced at the Steven Kent Winery. The first vintage, produced in 1999, came from the Folkendt Vineyard. The DeMayo Vineyard provided fruit for *Merrillie* through the 2004 vintage, and the Ernest Wente Vineyard is our new source. Though there clonal differences and soils and exposures vary, the impeccable balance of this wine remains unchanged.

VINTAGE

Harvest Date: September 20, 2005

Fruit: 100% Wente-clone Chardonnay. The fruit came in with brix levels of just over 25° and a complex, ripe flavor profile. Alcohol 15.0%.

Fermentation: After destemming and crushing the fruit was left to settle in stainless steel for 24 hours before it was put into oak barrels. Primary and secondary (Malo-lactic) fermentation were done under cool temperatures in barrel. Racked several times into clean barrels during its maturation, the wine was lightly filtered before bottling.

Aging: Approximately 70% new American and French oak barrels and 30% second use French and American oak were used.

Time in Barrel: 20 months

Release Date: May, 2007

VINEYARD

Location: Sourced from a site about ½ mile from the Winery between Tesla and Mines Roads in the Livermore Valley.

Soil: Sandy loam and clay.

Training: All vineyards use the Vertical Shoot Position (VSP) trellising method.

GROWING SEASON

Rainfall: 12.98 inches

Bloom: May

Weather: Below average rainfall in the first quarter of the year led to a very wet April (three times the average rainfall), though bloom and set were not adversely affected. Below average rainfall for the rest of the year coupled with dramatic swings in temperature, especially in the heart of the growing season resulted in one of the most challenging growing years for us.

