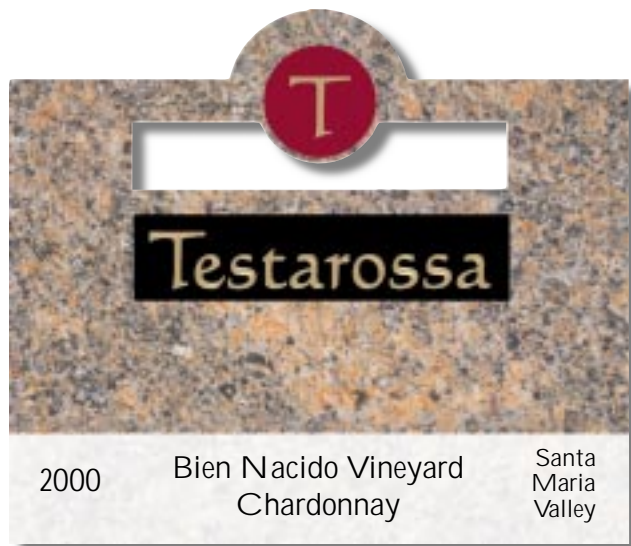


2000 Bien Nacido Vineyard Chardonnay



Ronn Wiegand, MW, Restaurant Wine

"Clearly, Testarossa is one of California's top Chardonnay producers."

Robert Parker's Wine Advocate

"An exuberantly fruity (plenty of the tropical variety) medium to full-bodied wine with considerable freshness. Everything is lively in this chewy, full-bodied refreshing Chardonnay."

1999 Vintage

92 points – James Laube's Hot New Wine 4/1/01

Testarossa, a Chardonnay and Pinot Noir specialist that focuses on vineyard-designated wines from many California appellations, has an impressive lineup of new releases, led by this bottling from the excellent Bien Nacido Vineyard in Santa Maria Valley. This cool climate, coastal vineyard routinely delivers top-flight grapes to more than a dozen wineries (Qupé, Au Bon Climat, Gary Farrell, Villa Mt. Eden and Steele, to name drop) and is ideally suited for Chardonnay. This wine, like most from owners Rob and Diane Jensen, is a beauty, rich and pure, with zingy citrus, grapefruit, pear and peach flavors and a long, multidimensional finish.

Wine Spectator - April 2001

1997 Vintage

94 points

Brilliant fruit. Ripe, generous, supple and complex, with lots of fresh, ripe pear, peach, fig, tangerine and spice nuances. Finishes with a pretty array of toasty oak. Drink now through 2006.

Wine Spectator - November 1999

1996 Vintage

93 points

A tremendous wine, ripe, complex, and concentrated, rich and sharply focused, brimming with pear, fig, apricot, and spicy flavors. The finish goes on and on. Drink now through 2002.

Wine Spectator - November 1998



California Central Coast

2000 BIEN NACIDO VINEYARD CHARDONNAY

The Bien Nacido Vineyard is ideally situated in the east-west facing Santa Maria Valley of Santa Barbara County. Because of the vineyard's proximity to the Pacific Ocean, cool afternoon breezes and morning fog moderate the weather, leading to long, even growing seasons. The entire vineyard has a gently sloping southern exposure that gives maximum sunlight to ripen the fruit. And the soil at Bien Nacido is a unique shaley loam, which adds to the complexity and intensity of the flavors we find here. Planted on its own roots to Riesling in 1973, our two blocks at Bien Nacido were grafted over to Chardonnay in the mid 1980s.

The 2000 harvest was a return to a more typical growing season following the two exceptionally cool years of 1998 and 1999. Beautiful spring weather allowed an above average crop to set at Bien Nacido. The summer and fall were warm, and we picked the fruit two weeks earlier than the previous harvests. The grapes were hand-harvested into half-ton bins, and then they were whole-cluster pressed into settling tanks. After 24 hours of cold settling, the juice was racked off its lees and sent to barrels for fermentation. Half of the barrels were inoculated with a Burgundian yeast strain, while the other half were allowed to go through a native fermentation. The cellar temperatures dropped rapidly in the Fall of 2000, and the cellar was so cool it took a full three months for the barrels to go to dryness. The malo-lactic fermentation commenced as the cellar warmed up to 58°F in late February and finished in mid-summer 2001. For its entire ten months in barrel, we stirred the lees in the wine an average of every two weeks to add to its texture and complexity. 45% of the oak was new, and all of it was French from Burgundian coopers, predominantly from the forests of Allier, Vosges and Tronçais. We bottled the 2000 Bien Nacido Chardonnay in early September 2001, just after the start of that year's harvest. (EK)

VINEYARD:

Appellation: Santa Maria Valley
(Santa Barbara County)

Owner: Miller Family

Vine Age: 27 years

Acreage (for Testarossa):

Chardonnay, 7 acres, planted in 1973

Pinot Noir, 2 acres, planted in 1973

Yield: 4-5 tons per acre

Soil Composition: Elder series shaley loam

Elevation: 440 feet

Exposure: South/southwest

Climate: Marine influenced, cool summer temperatures ranging from daytime highs in the low 70s to pre-dawn lows in the 50s.

First Testarossa vintage: 1995

HARVEST:

Sugar: 23.7° Brix

Total acidity: 7.1 g/L

pH: 3.25

Date harvested: October 15, 2000

BOTTLE:

Alcohol: 14.1%

Total acidity: 6.4 g/L

pH: 3.38

Bottling date: September 6, 2001

Time in oak: 10 months

Percent new oak: 45%

Production: 466 cases, 750mL

79 cases, 375mL

Release date: February 1, 2002

Suggested Retail Price: 750mL \$34.00

350mL \$17.00

Optimum time for consumption: 2002-2005