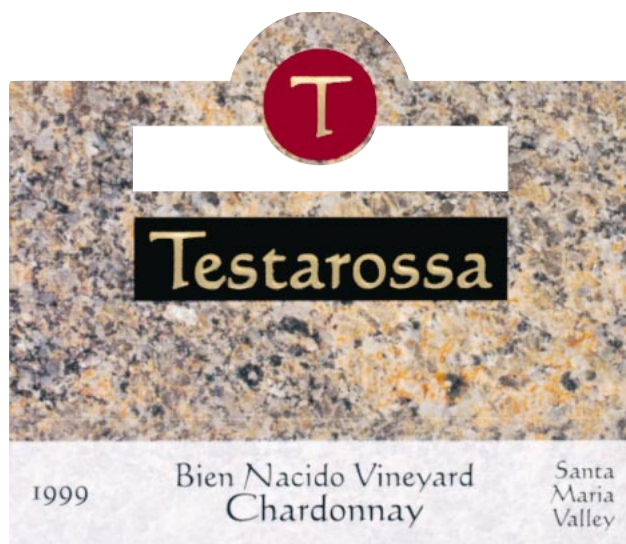


1999 Bien Nacido Vineyard Chardonnay



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, the weather there is moderated with cool afternoon breezes and morning fog, leading to very long, even growing seasons. The entire vineyard has a gently sloping southern exposure that provides maximum sunlight to ripen the fruit. And the soil, a major contributing factor in all the world's vineyards, is a unique shaley loam at Bien Nacido, and adds to the complexity and intensity of the flavors we find here. Planted on its own roots in 1973, our two blocks at Bien Nacido were grafted over to Chardonnay in the mid-1980s.

1999 marked the second year in a row that the Bien Nacido Vineyard, as well as the rest of California, had an exceptionally long, cool growing season. Because it is located far south of where the fall rains hit northern California, Bien Nacido was left basking safely in the warm autumn sun until our Chardonnay was harvested on November 1. The grapes were hand-harvested into half-ton bins and then they were whole-cluster pressed into settling tanks. After 72 hours of cold settling, the juice was racked off its lees and sent to barrels for fermentation. No yeast inoculum was added and all 60 barrels completed native yeast fermentation in an average of 30 days at 13 degrees Celsius. The wine was inoculated for malolactic fermentation, but because it was so late in the year, winter temperatures prevented the wine from completing this process until the cellar warmed up again in late April. For its entire nine months in barrel, we stirred the lees in the wine once every two weeks to add to its texture and complexity. 40% of the oak was new, and all of it was French from Burgundian coopers, predominantly from the forests of Allier, Vosges and Tronçais. *(EK)*

Color: Medium gold.
Nose: Subtle, almost muted, tropical fruit aromas. Melon, white fig, caramel apple. Sweet, toasty oak.
Palate: Rich and round. More tropical notes develop in the mid-palate. Bananas, pineapples, ripe pears, tangerine. Long, lingering finish with oaky undertones. A well-crafted wine, it will develop over the next five years.

Appellation: Santa Maria Valley
(Santa Barbara County)

Vineyard: Bien Nacido Vineyard
Vine Age: 22 years

Harvest

Sugar: 24.6° Brix
Total acidity: 8.0 g/L
pH: 3.32
Date harvested: November 1, 1999

Bottle

Alcohol: 14.4%
Total acidity: 7.0 g/L
pH: 3.37

Bottling date: August 1, 2000
Time in oak: 8 months
Percent new oak: 50%

Production: 504 cases, 750mL
154 cases, 375mL
Release date: February 1, 2001
Suggested Retail Price: 750mL, \$ 32.
375mL, \$ 16.
Optimum time for consumption: 2001-2005