

Linden Vineyards 2018 Village Chardonnay

Style

Charm: “the power or quality of giving delight or arousing admiration”. This is a slowly revealing wine that defines restraint and harmony. Its aromas have a quiet floral perfume. The balance and seamlessness on the palate are close to ethereal.

Food Pairings

The 2018 Village Chardonnay has a lightness and freshness that makes it an ideal pairing with simply prepared fish and seafood. Hearty, main course salads with grains, beans and fresh cheeses also work well.

Vineyards

Hardscrabble Vineyard (65%) on top of the Blue Ridge at 1,300 to 1,400 feet with an eastern to southern slope. Deep, well-drained mineral soils give acidity and good structure. Vines planted in 1985, 1988, 1994, 2010, 2014 and 2016. Mainly VSP with some French Lyre training systems. A mix of Wente clones.

Avenius Vineyard (25%) is just 1 mile north of Linden Vineyards at 1,300 feet contributes good acidity and verve. Vines planted in 1996 on Lyre training system. Dijon clones.

Boisseau Vineyard (10%) is located on a bluff above Front Royal in the Shenandoah Valley at an elevation of 600 feet. The vineyard is west facing on light, deep, loam soils. The vines were planted in 2000 and are trained on cordon/VSP trellising. Dijon clones.

Vintage

2018 was with wettest year ever recorded in this area. Much of that rain fell during the growing season. To say the vintage was challenging would be an understatement. Facing reality by strategically “punting” was the best way to approach growing and winemaking decisions. The result: light, pretty, quaffable white wines with charm.

Bud break was about a week late. Then May turned warm stimulating vigorous shoot growth and long internode length. Continued wet conditions reduced berry set in June leading to small clusters. Two gloriously sunny, dry weeks in early July gave hope, but it was not to be. The vines did not stop their vegetative growth by veraison.

The leading harvest parameter was to pick before any degradation (rot being the main concern). White grapes came in with good flavors and aromatics. Acidities were high, but within the bounds of making a balanced wine. The problem was lack of concentration. The winemaking goal was to make “pretty” white wines that would be fresh and quaffable. Notions of making single vineyard wines were quickly dismissed. All the prized blocks that typically go into the single vineyard wines were part of the Village Chardonnay in 2018. Harvest was September 5th to 14th.

Winemaking

Chilled grapes were sorted, pressed, juice settled and then barrel fermented warm (70's F) in old, neutral French oak. No malolactic fermentation. Aged sur lie in barrel for 10 months. 9,840 bottles produced. This wine will improve in the bottle for several years. Alcohol 12.3%.

