



Age of vines: 36 years
 Appellation: Napa Valley
 Sub-Appellation: Spring Mountain District
 Farming: dry-farmed mountain vineyard
 Varietal Content: 100% Chardonnay
 Fermentation: 100% barrel fermented
 Time in oak: 11 months
 Alcohol: 14.3%
 Cases produced: 754 cases
 Winemakers & Winegrowers:
 Charles Smith & Stuart Smith



WINEMAKER NOTES

The 2007 vintage was both interesting and fun; more importantly the quality of the wine appears to be not only excellent, but maybe even great. Because of a heat spike in mid-August, the vintage started early. The first of the three wines from the vintage, our 2007 Riesling (now long gone), was excellent, and we think the 2007 Chardonnay is every bit as good. This Chardonnay is a lovely vibrant medium yellow, with a mixture of green apples, pears and lemons in the aroma. This is a very user friendly, hedonistic wine that is fun to drink, but at the same time is very serious. While the middle palate is soft, lush and round, the wine has an underlying backbone of acid which makes the wine go perfectly with food. We would be surprised if you didn't think this was one of our very best Chardonnays and maybe one of the best you've ever tasted.

Smith-Madrone's Chardonnay is grown at the top of Spring Mountain (1,900-foot elevation), west of St. Helena in the Napa Valley. The vines are planted on very steep slopes (up to 35% slope) in red volcanic soil. The vines receive only the rain that Mother Nature lets fall from the sky, forcing the vines to send their roots deep into the mountain soil in search of moisture. This centuries old method of farming wine grapes, known today as dry farming, creates a grape with intense flavor, structure, and finesse.

At Smith-Madrone our goal is to make artisanal wines which are distinctive and are an expression of both the vintage and us, as vintners, but above all else, are wines which bring pleasure to the senses.

December 2009, 1WineDude, blogger Joe Roberts

...Not only was the Smith-Madrone a welcome departure from the often (too) heavily-oaked Chardonnay being made along Highway 29, it's also fairly priced at \$30 (another nice departure from the usual Highway 29 fare). There's tropical fruit, but also a broad spectrum of stone-related flavors and aromas (pear, minerals), all in a **nuanced and elegant** taste presentation.

June 11, 2009, Dan Berger's Vintage Experiences

Exceptional: Terrific aroma of slate, bright citrus, pear and blossoms. **One of the finest wines ever made by Charlie and Stu Smith.**

September 2009, Chris Oggenfuss, www.vintuba.com

Delicate aromas of apple, pear, acacia with hints of ginger-ale. Showing some minerality and oak on the nose. The flavors are of apple, guava, citrus, vanilla and **balanced nicely by good acidity**. Nice wine with medium complex finish.

March 21, 2009, Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel by Anne Schamberg

It's difficult to resist the **idiosyncratic and underrated Smith-Madrone** Winery. It's a family-owned operation with vineyard manager Stu and his winemaker brother, Charles, sharing the responsibilities. This out-of-the-way spot in the Spring Mountain District - schedule an appointment before you go - offers panoramic views, as well as a chance to get away from the hype of trendier producers. "We do a lot of work that the boys and girls down in the Valley aren't interested in," Stu said, referring to an elevation that reaches 1,900 feet and vineyards that are steeply sloped. Rocks "that ruin your equipment" and a constant battle with soil erosion are what they contend with. According to Stu, there's no advantage to hillside grape growing, "except for the quality of the wine," which he described as having an added measure of finesse and structure. He also pointed out that he and his brother stick - as much as possible - to dry-farming, which benefits both the wines and the thirsty environment. They use irrigation only for young vines. If you taste **the impressive Smith-Madrone lineup**, you'll understand what they are getting at. (And while the wines are not inexpensive, they are not out of line with other top-quality bottles from Napa.) When it comes to Chardonnay, the 2007 has an appealing mineral style reminiscent of Chablis from France. It should taste even better in a year or two, once the flavors have had a chance to knit.