



2007 QUPÉ CHARDONNAY “BIEN NACIDO RESERVE – BLOCK ELEVEN”

This wine is 78% Chardonnay from Block Eleven and 22% Roussanne from block Ten at Bien Nacido Vineyard in the Santa Maria Valley. Both are custom blocks planted exclusively for Qupé in 1997, on the hillside just opposite the winery.

Poor weather during flowering and set gave us a small Chardonnay crop in 2007 (12.4 tons off of six acres). The Roussanne crop wasn't affected and gave us a decent yield (14.3 tons off of five acres). We harvested the Chardonnay on September 28th at 23.7° brix, 8.3 acidity and 3.22 pH. The Roussanne was picked in two lots, lot one (70% of the grapes) was picked on October 11th at 21.4° brix, 9.9 acidity and 3.16 pH; lot two (30% of the Roussanne) was picked on October 22nd at 26.0° brix, 8.6 acidity and an amazing 3.17 pH! This wine is a blend of 36 barrels of the Chardonnay, 8 barrels of the lot one Roussanne and 2 barrels of the lot two Roussanne... an average of 23.4° brix, 8.6 acidity and 3.21 pH.

Both Chardonnay and Roussanne were whole cluster pressed, chilled and settled overnight, then put straight to barrel for fermentation, aging and full malo. The Chardonnay was in 2/3 new and 1/3 once used barrels, the Roussanne was all in once used barrels - all were François Frères French oak. Both lots were aged on the lees for the first eleven months, then racked, blended and returned to neutral barrels for another two months - 13 months total. 946 cases of 750ml and 200 cases of half bottles were bottled with filtration in November 2008.

This is pretty classic Block Eleven Chardonnay, but with headier aromatics from the addition of so much Roussanne. By the way, the reason for putting so much Roussanne (which we bottle by itself as the "Bien Nacido Hillside Estate") into the Chardonnay was because we didn't have enough Chardonnay, we had more Roussanne than normal, and Chardonnay is easier to sell! The aromas run the range of citrus, pear, hazelnut, honeysuckle and minerals, all enveloped by a nice dollop of oak. This wine should age beautifully for 10-15 years.