

STAGLIN

FAMILY VINEYARD

2008 ESTATE CHARDONNAY

Rutherford, Napa Valley

<i>Release Date</i>	March 1, 2009
<i>Harvest Dates</i>	August 30-September 14, 2008
<i>Fermentation</i>	100% Barrel Fermentation
<i>Barrel Aging</i>	11 Months
<i>Oak</i>	100% French: 54% new, 46% used
<i>Blend</i>	100% Chardonnay
<i>Alcohol</i>	14.8%

Winemaker Tasting Notes

The 2008 year was challenging, yet rewarding. The winter rains stopped completely after January and set us up for a long dry summer that was preceded by one of the worst frost seasons on record. The lack of rain and the intensity of the frost resulted in a growing season defined by vineyard stress, followed by a consistent, though not excessive, heat and heartbreakingly low yields. Our crew was able to deftly manage these conditions and provided me with small-berried fruit of great intensity and character. During our late August through mid-September Chardonnay harvest, the grapes were picked in the cool early mornings to maintain their freshness, natural acidity and delicate flavors. We utilize traditional Burgundian winemaking techniques, while respecting the unique quality of the fruit our vineyard delivers. The grapes are hand sorted, whole cluster pressed and then fermented in barrel. Though we generally restrict malolactic fermentation to preserve acidity and crispness, this year we again allowed a few lots to go through this secondary fermentation for some additional roundness and increased complexity. Finally, we aged this wine on its lees for eleven months with regular 'batonnage' during the first eight months.

The 2008 Estate Chardonnay resonates with the color of golden straw in the late summer and begins with a nose of lemon zest, broken honeycomb and ripe pears intermixed with galanga and crushed slate. The medium body of this wine opens with a palate of crème brûlée and white peaches that morphs into a lemongrass spiked citrus custard highlighted by hints of vanilla and oak spice. The resonant acidity underneath all of these flavors should allow a long life and good evolution.

