



*M*ountain
vineyards,
classical
winemaking,
limited
production”

BELLE CÔTE VINEYARD

*Peter Michael Estate
Eastern Sonoma County*

Planted: 1990

Chardonnay clonal selections:

See 33¹/₃%

Old Wente 33¹/₃%

Rued 33¹/₃%

Elevation: 1,800 feet

Soil: volcanic-origin rhyolite

Exposure: south-southeast



PETER MICHAEL
WINERY

1998

BELLE CÔTE

Estate Chardonnay



**WINEMAKER
NOTES**



This is our fourth vintage release from our Belle Côte vineyard—the first vineyard developed in a series of Peter Michael estate Chardonnay vineyards. Back in 1989 we discovered the potential of this high mountain elevation site when our research revealed cool maritime breezes, rocky, well-drained soils of low fertility, and an ideal exposure to the morning sun.

We planted the vineyard in 1990 using a classical vertical trellis system and a relatively dense spacing of 1200 vines per acre. Belle Côte was divided equally between three clonal selections of Chardonnay: the “Rued” clone, the famous “Old Wente” clone and the “See” clone. Cuttings of the Chardonnay clones were field selected from exceptional vineyards. Sir Peter named the vineyard Belle Côte, which means “beautiful slope”, after the famous ski run in Courcheval, France.

**TASTING
NOTES**

Clonal selections greatly influence the wine’s bouquet and multi-dimensional character. Aromas of roasted hazelnuts, honey, and tropical fruits fill the nose. Refined notes of oak are expressed as roasted nuts. Rich fruit flavors expand on the palate; sweet apple blossoms, concentrated dried fruits, fresh red apple and citrus oils are evident from start to finish. New oak tones of vanilla enhanced by the toast level of the barrel nicely balance a mineral-toned acid finish. A medium to full-bodied Chardonnay with exquisite texture and a rich aftertaste. The 1998 will age very well for at least six or more years.

**WINE
INFORMATION**

Harvested: October 14 - October 21, 1998

70% of the cuvée was fermented using native yeasts

100% barrel fermented from the cooperages Francois Frères and Tonnelleries de Bourgogne

Barrel aged sur lies for 11 months with weekly bâtonnage

Bottled without fining or filtration August 24, 1999

Alcohol: 14.2% pH 3.69 TA 5.9 g/L

Production: 1264 cases 750 ml bottles, 240 1.5L bottles

Release date: March 1, 2000