

CHAPPELLET

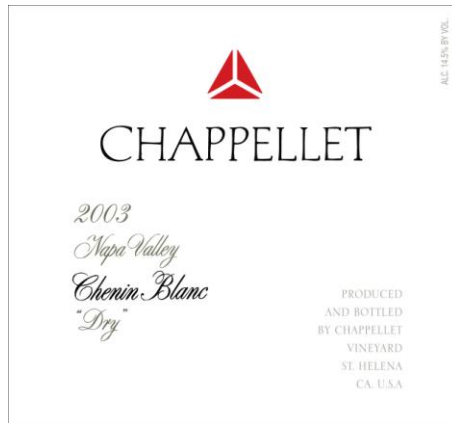
Pritchard Hill, Napa

Chappellet started life in 1967, as only the second winery built in Napa Valley since Prohibition. Like its immediate contemporaries Robert Mondavi and Heitz, Donn and Molly Chappellet's venture was marked by daring, vision, grueling hard work, a little luck ... and above all the discovery of a terrific terroir.

Perched on Pritchard Hill high above Lake Hennessey and higher-still above the Napa Valley floor, these vineyards have become home to some of California's most famous and distinctive Cabernet Sauvignons, wines reflecting a beneficent micro-climate and complex geology. Some illustrious winemakers have served the Chappellets here, beginning with Tony Soter and later including Cathy Corison and now Phillip Titus.

With the 1994 vintage, the Chappellet family and wine-maker Titus have taken a new point of departure with Cabernet, one which reconciles the distinctive berries, cedar and "smoke" and the sheer density of Pritchard Hill wine with subtle tannins and an ingratiating, youthful fruit and mouthfeel. At the same time, their Chardonnay has taken a more opulent, less straight-laced stylistic direction.

Yet, while none of these a la mode varieties were to be found on Pritchard Hill back in 1967, there *were* vines. Three year-old Chenin Blanc, to be exact. This was a variety widely planted in Napa back then, but soon to be drastically eclipsed. Chappellets, making the best of their acreage, vinified the Chenin in barrel and instantly hit on a distinctively delicious variation on the soft, sweet style that prevailed in Napa in those days. The family has remained true to that style, and to those (now!) "Old Vines" ever since.



"Chappellet Vineyards, which was one of the original new-wave Napa Valley wineries ... as quietly remained one of its best for thirty years. ... Since its founding ... it has been something of a winemaker star factory [yet] as good as [his predecessors] were, and as stunning as most of their Chappellet wines have proven to be with extensive bottle age, none of them understood the complex Pritchard Hill vineyards so well, or made such expressive wines from them, as present wine-maker Phillip Corallo-Titus. ..."

Rod Smith,

Wine & Spirits (October, 1998)

Chenin Blanc

Crisp, stainless-steel-fermented Chenin from Pritchard Hill and purchased fruit from some of Napa Valley's other few remaining Chenin Blanc vines.

"M oelleux" 375 ml.

... you guessed it: 100% Chenin again, this time in its guise as great desert wine, picked from late-hanging, partially shrivelled, botrytized fruit. Only a few hundred cases produced.

Napa Chardonnay

Produced entirely from estate fruit, this Chardonnay offers a wonderful integration of fruit, oak and lees, creamy yet pleasantly bracing.

Chardonnay "Signature"

Chosen for clone, location and age of vine, the Chardonnay for the "Signature" release is fully capable of standing up to extended aging in a higher percent of new wood. Creamy and complex.

Merlot

From young vines, but unusually low yields. Pure, ripe, lush and concentrated.