

# CHÂTEAU DES CHARMES 2005 HARVEST REPORT

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 7, 2005

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**Grape Variety:** Chardonnay (for sparkling wine)

**Vineyard Block:** Lepp Vineyard, adjacent to Line Seven Road

**Sub-appellation:** Four Mile Creek

**Weather Conditions:** Sunny, clear, 27°C

**Brix:** 20.9 °

**ph:** 3.23

**Total Acidity:** 8.85

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## Field Notes:

This report chronicles the notion that at the heart of it, we are farmers at the mercy of Mother Nature. The plan for yesterday and today was to pick Chardonnay for sparkling wine. We have a block of Chardonnay at our Lepp Vineyard that often is picked early in the harvest with the eye to using it for sparkling wine. As discussed last week when we picked Pinot Noir for sparkling, it is important to pick sparkling wine grapes when their brix levels are around 20°. Lowish sugar and good balancing acidity in the grapes will make a wine that is fresh and clean on the palate. Well, that was the plan.

Yesterday went well. We picked a good quantity of the Chardonnay from Lepp Vineyard and called it a night. We went back this morning and, here's the Mother Nature part, the brix jumped to 22°. So, we continued to pick today but these grapes will be kept separate from those picked yesterday. Today's Chardonnay will be used to make table wine instead of sparkling wine. Amazing that a small jump in the sugar can mean so much in the end wine.

I discussed the game plan with Paul Sr. and he wants to vinify separately the Lepp Vineyard Chardonnay picked yesterday. Then pick Chardonnay from Creek Road tomorrow and vinify it separately. Then, from the two batches, assemble the cuvée for sparkling wine. The soils for the two blocks are quite different – heavier clay at Lepp Vineyard and sandy at Creek Road Vineyard. The blending of the wines from these two different terroirs should produce a more complex and interesting cuvée. That's the plan.

So often when we pull a cork from a bottle of wine we only think about the flavours and aromas in the moment. What I hope to share with you with these Harvest Reports is a little of the "behind-the-scenes". Hopefully the next time you pull a cork from a bottle of our wine you will remember a few tidbits from these Harvest Reports and think about the labour of love that went into producing the wine you are enjoying. The wine industry has a wonderful mystique about it, and that's great. But in reality, we are farmers. We can only take what Mother Nature gives us and hope we produce a wine you enjoy and one that is a faithful expression of where it is from.

Tomorrow I'll explain a little about how sparkling wine, and Champagne is made.



Chardonnay bunches ready to be picked.

As always, please feel free to email me directly if you have any suggestions or questions. Watch for many more postings as the harvest continues.

*Michèle Bosc*

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