



2006 SAUVIGNON BLANC SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

VINEYARD NOTES

Star Lane Vineyard, located at the far eastern end of the Santa Ynez Valley, is both the warmest and the highest elevation vineyard in the appellation. Backing up to the lower slopes of the San Rafael Mountains which loom high above the ranch, Star Lane features a unique range of weathered sand, gravel and alluvial cobbles over a clay/loam subsoil. With both excellent drainage and good water holding capacity in the subsoil, these conditions mimic those of the best properties of Bordeaux and are an ideal home for our small block of Sauvignon Blanc. At the southern-most end of our canyon, this block benefits from a stronger maritime influence than the rest of the ranch, promoting even ripening and racy acidity in the wines. The Sauvignon Blanc at Star Lane is typically picked a full week in advance of our neighbors' and lends itself to a powerful yet balanced style of wine.

WINEMAKING NOTES

Having seen the results of ripeness and fermentation experiments from the 2005 vintage, a few fundamental changes were made to our Sauvignon Blanc production techniques. We feel strongly that we have arrived at a true house style and are proud of the 2006 vintage, believing it is our best Sauvignon Blanc to date.

Picking commenced in late August at 22° brix (roughly 13.6% potential alcohol) and continued over a period of 10 days, with our final lots entering the winery at 23.8° brix (14.5% potential alcohol). Early lots were whole-cluster pressed, racked from their heaviest solids and transferred to 55 gallon stainless steel barrels for fermentation. The following third of the grapes were handled in the same fashion, but transferred to 360 gallons stainless tanks for fermentation. In 2005 we experimented with three different strains of selected yeasts as opposed to our normal native fermentations and found they brought to the wine unbelievable aromas very reminiscent of Sancerre and Pouilly Fume. The stainless fermented lots in '06 were inoculated with these yeasts and allowed to ferment at elevated temperatures approaching 77° Fahrenheit. The final, ripest lots were settled only minimally after pressing and were fermented in used

wood barrels with wild yeast. Finally, 10% of the tank lots received skin contact treatment for 14 hours. Lees of all lots were stirred bi-weekly and malolactic fermentation was blocked.

Bottled unfiltered after 10 months on fermentation lees, our 2006 Sauvignon Blanc combines the tremendous power and depth of the 2005 with a new aromatic vibrancy not present in earlier vintages.

TASTING NOTES

The updated production techniques we applied to the 2006 vintage have produced a wine of uncommon breeding and intensity. Stainless steel lots bring vivid aromas of wild spring flowers, gooseberries and mandarin orange, while the wood lots contribute the rich lemon curd and grapefruit aromas that have been the hallmark of Star Lane Sauvignon Blanc. On the palate, the lots fermented in tank and stainless barrels offer a sense of balance and poise and barrel fermentation presents a mouthfeel marked by breathtaking depth. With plenty of natural acidity keeping things vibrant and structured, our 2006 is delicious now with the freshest of shellfish and will improve with up to 5 years in the cellar.

VINTAGE NOTES

Average rainfall followed by warm temperatures in late winter caused a very early bud burst in Santa Barbara County—up to 14 days early in some cases. Mid-spring rains, however, slowed things down and had our vineyard manager on his toes about potential disease pressure. Bloom lasted almost two weeks in parts of the vineyard and set was, consequently, erratic. Summer passed with mild temperatures punctuated by our usual two to three day heat spells, and conditions during veraison were favorably warm and consistent. After a slight crop adjustment towards the end of veraison, the vines at Star Lane produced an only slightly below average crop load of intense but very balanced fruit. Yields in the Sauvignon Blanc, meanwhile, were naturally an ideal 4 tons per acre and very little hand work was required to balance the vines. As they enter into their second decade, these vines have established extensive root systems and have become entirely self-regulating.

STAR LANE WINES

After a ten year search throughout California, Jim and Mary Dierberg selected Santa Barbara County as an ideal area for growing grapes and producing world class wines. The Santa Ynez Valley is located just north of the town of Santa Barbara and possesses a variety of sub regions that vary from relatively cool to quite warm. It is within the eastern, warmer reaches of Santa Ynez Valley that Jim and Mary have selected the pursuit of traditional Bordeaux red varieties along with Sauvignon Blanc and Syrah. Star Lane Vineyard is located in the very eastern end of the Santa Ynez Valley on the southern slope of Ranger Peak. The vineyards are planted on hillsides that range from 950 to 1,550 feet. The Dierbergs began planting Star Lane Vineyard in 1996. There are now almost 250 acres planted with no less than eighty separate blocks comprised of Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Petit Verdot, Sauvignon Blanc and Syrah. A myriad clones and rootstocks within these eighty blocks provide an extremely wide range of fruit for our winemaker to work with. Each of these blocks is harvested separately and evaluated for potential inclusion in Star Lane wines. This wonderful array of grape material inspires us to be as selective and as creative as possible in producing Star Lane Vineyard wines.

FINISHED WINE

Composition: 100% Sauvignon Blanc
Appellation: Santa Ynez Valley
Alcohol: 14.1%
Total Acid: 9.1 g/L
pH: 3.16

STAR LANE
VINEYARD

P.O. Box 217, Santa Ynez, CA 93460

Phone (805) 736-0757 * Fax (805) 688-0596

www.starlanevineyard.com