

# CHATEAU MONTELENA

Chateau Montelena's 19th century stone structure stands as a quality icon in Napa Valley, consistently producing some of the finest wines in California.



## Potter Valley Riesling 2021

Mendocino County, California

### ESTATE

Chateau Montelena's history is one of the deepest and most storied in the Napa Valley and California. Founded just north of Calistoga in 1882, it was one of the largest wineries in the state. Prohibition put an end to Montelena's winemaking, and the next major era began in 1968, when Jim Barrett purchased the estate. Jim fell in love with this exceptional property, blessed with a complex mix of soils, slopes and biodiversity of wildlife and fauna. He had a dream of creating wine at the level of the great First Growths of Bordeaux, and set about replanting the vineyard, outfitting the winery with modern equipment, and studying the processes necessary for farming and winemaking at the highest quality level.

### WINE

This is a hidden gem in the portfolio. Chateau Montelena's take on Riesling certainly rewards some bottle age and culinary experimentation, and many are amazed at how easy it is to finish the bottle. The wine offers only a hint of sweetness, and opens up to pretty floral aromatics with orange zest and Bartlett pear elements. Balanced and lively, this is a terrific wine to enhance any occasion.

### VINEYARD

*Soils:* Fruit is sourced from the floor of the tiny Potter Valley, which sits at 1,000 ft above sea level and benefits from alluvial fans that extend from the hillslopes above.

*Farming:* Chateau Montelena is committed to sustainable farming and produces wine in their solar powered winery. The Riesling vineyard is certified organic.

### WINEMAKING

*Grape Varieties:* 100% Riesling

*Fermentation:* Temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks to allow the wines to ferment slowly and evenly.

*Aging:* 6 months in French oak and stainless steel.

*Alcohol:* 13.4% ABV

### VINTAGE

This vintage was the perfect opportunity to explore not just the nuances of Riesling but the manifold dimensions of this expressive variety. In general, the climate in Potter Valley imparts a consistency and stability of flavor to fruit in the vineyard, with significant variation emanating from early autumn rain or in the case of 2021, prolonged drought. It's in these vintages that the basic character of the fruit is substantively changed; not detrimentally, but fundamentally different. It's in this vein that the 2021 Montelena Riesling stands on its own. In a warm, dry year, when "conventional" wisdom would predict excessive ripeness, plentiful residual sugar, and shallow acidity, instead there is balance, finesse, and freshness.

### TASTING NOTES

The ripeness of the vintage is immediately apparent as star jasmine, honeysuckle and fresh apricot are bolstered by cinnamon and clove. The fresh flowers eventually yield to dried peach and mango as the aromas turn tropical with a subtle hint of beeswax. The spice is more subdued on the palate, uncovering a latent suppleness and viscosity, further enhanced by stonefruit as well as ripe, Honeycrisp apple. It's a beautiful balance that is polished and punctuated by a firm band of acidity transitioning to juicy pear. There's a soft, roundness on the finish that pulls in all of the minerality of the wine but layers in baked apple and just a touch of lemon rind. The pear is still present but this time as a complement to more tropical notes of lychee and fresh pineapple.