



2009 *Conner Lee Vineyard Chardonnay*
COLUMBIA VALLEY

Conner Lee Vineyard is a cool site in a warm sunny region on Radar Hill south of Othello, Washington. In our Eastern Washington desert environment, the spring and fall nights can be 50 degrees cooler than the day temperatures. The hot 90+ degree summer ripens the fruit, while the fall temperatures keep the acids high and the pH low. The Conner Lee Vineyard 1989 block and the 2005 clone #95 block were both planted with ungrafted vines in well drained sand-silt soils. The vineyard has been certified Salmon Safe since 2008.

Planning our wine from the start, we cane pruned in February, then shoot thinned in May, cluster thinned at veraison, and did not leaf strip. All these efforts promoted concentration in the fruit early in the year. The shaded fruit and small crop support the elegance and concentration in our wine.

The June 11th flowering was ideal and it afforded us an early ripe harvest on September 12th, at dawn. We finished harvest three days later with the clone #95 chardonnay. The block '89 was classically ripe at 23.2° brix and clone #95 was 21.5° brix, with pHs of 3.2 and organic acids of 10g/L. We hand sorted clusters. Then we both whole cluster pressed some fruit and crushed the other blocks of chardonnay by a unique method I designed to allow for greater extraction and texture in the wine. We do not alter the juice with finings or additions of acid or water. Instead, we grow our fruit to balance the natural juice acids so that our wine needs no additions. The resulting rich and vibrant wine offers a balanced acidic and silky style is the hallmark of our chardonnay. The raw juice fermented in mature Burgundy barrels and was lees stirred with partial malolactic fermentation.

We bottled the chardonnay July 20, 2010. Buty white wines are naturally heat and cold stable between 45°F to 90°F. Crystalline sediments may develop if stored cooler. We believe this wine is ideally served at 50°F, where after it can warm up during the meal.

The nose is attractive and ripe, made of clean stone fruit flavors and vibrant citrus notes. The silky texture and the long, crisp, fruit-filled finish complete our wine, un-obscured by oak. It is young at release and will open and taste best over the next three years.

Four hundred and three cases were produced. Released September 1, 2010, our Conner Lee Vineyard Chardonnay retails for \$35 per bottle.