

2011 Santa Lucia Highlands Chardonnay

Harvest date: 9-29-11

T.A.: 6.1 g/L

pH: 3.55

Barrel aging: 17 months in 100% French oak

Fermentation: 100% destemmed

Bottling date: 2-14-13

Alcohol: 14.2%

This first Sandler white wine was inspired by two people, first of all, my wife, Michelle, who has asked me for several years to make a Chardonnay for Sandler. I surprised her with a bottle just before this release, and she approves!

The second person who asked for a Sandler Chardonnay was my distributor in Colorado, John Salamanski. John and his wife, Penny, own CS Wines. They are receiving the lion's share of the 76 cases produced, with just a few cases left for the Sandler mailing list (and Michelle, of course).

The 2011 vintage was extremely cool, from the spring right through the summer and fall. For early ripening grape varieties, like Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, this wasn't such a bad thing at all. This SLH Chard aged in French oak for 17 months, so the extended time in wood has softened the high acidity from the '11 harvest quite a bit, and it is already drinking well. Anticipated maturity: late 2013 through 2015.

