2008 Chardonnay
Appellation Series, Santa Lucia Highlands

The Numbers

Varietal(s):	100% Chardonnay
Appellation:	Santa Lucia Highlands, Vigne Monte Nero Vineyard
TA	.68
PH:	3.58
Barrel Regime:	100% French 40% new Marsannay and Damy barrels, 60% 2nd and 3rd year
Finished Alcohol:	15.4%
Total 9-liter cases:	255

The Vineyard and Cellar

Owned by the Maestri family and farmed by Dan and Ray Franscioni – Vigna Monte Nero is the source vineyard for CRU's Santa Lucia Highland Chardonnay. Adjacent to many famed Santa Lucia Highlands vineyards (Mer Soleil, Sleepy Hollow, Rosella's, and Double L) Vigna Monte Nero produces chardonnay with bright fruit flavors and crisp acidity. Our chardonnay is planted predominately to clone 96.

The fruit was de-stemmed and whole berry pressed without addition of SO2, the juice was then settled for 1 day and racked off the sediment. After racking, the juice was inoculated with CY3079 yeast (Selected for structure and purity of fruit). The CY3079 yeast tends to make 'pretty' wines, with elegance rather than power. The wine was barreled down at first signs of yeast activity, and cool fermented in our barrel room. Fermentation lasted 14-28 days. The wines were inoculated with Viniflora Oenos malolactic bacteria at dryness, and completed 100% malolactic fermentation in the barrel. The lees were stirred bi-monthly at first, then once monthly for the duration of barrel ageing. The Wine was pulled from barrel in July of 2009 and bottled on September 10, 2009. The wines were 100% barrel fermented in French Oak, with 40% new Marsannay and Damy medium toast barrels, with the remaining, 60% in 2nd and 3rd year barrels.

The Wine

The 2008 Santa Lucia Highlands is pale gold in color, with a toasty spice laden nose. On the palate flavors of mango, butterscotch and vanilla bean are layered with smoky oak. A layer of lemon rind mixed with mineral elements compliments the wines dark toast elements, contributing multiple layers of complexity.