



2011 Merry Edwards Chardonnay
Russian River Valley
Olivet Lane

2011 presented another wonderful opportunity to produce a wine from the renowned Olivet Lane property. I count every vintage completed as a treasure from this now 40-year-old vineyard. This wine needs to be coddled during the entire winegrowing process. First, special fruit thinning is required to bring out her very best character traits. Then she requires extra nutrients, vitamins and lees stirring. Like the “venerable lady” that she is, her barrels must be placed outside in the sun each day during the winter and following spring in order to complete both the yeast and secondary fermentations. The resulting wine is certainly worth the extra effort and attention!

The beautiful straw gold color of this Chardonnay portends its deeply complex nature. Its mouthwatering aroma is lush with sun-ripened Gravenstein apples, honeyed apricots and crème brûlée. Subtle hints of toasted spicy oak, sweet nutmeg and caramel complete its rich profile. In the mouth, this wine is elegant and regal, showing good acidity, structure and the fine balance characteristic of Russian River Valley.

I have paired this Chardonnay with a lovely dish created by Shaun Gameraoz of Irvine, California – *Bacon-Wrapped Stuffed Chicken Breast*. He submitted this creation to our ongoing Win a Magnum contest. I prepared it recently for a family gathering and it got a thumbs-up! You can find this recipe along with others at www.merryedwards.com.