

ALEXANDER VALLEY VINEYARDS

Alexander Valley Vineyards is well known for top Cabernet Sauvignon, but, one trip to the 600 acre Wetzel Family Estate and you'll quickly see why we are also equally proud of our Chardonnay. Our property is bordered by the Mayacamas Mountains to the east and the Russian River to the west. The river runs the length of the valley and provides a conduit pulling cooling fog through Healdsburg and into the Alexander Valley each day.

In 1966 we started planting Chardonnay on the estate's coolest sites by the river and we, like neighboring growers, sold our fruit to other wineries. From the beginning Alexander Valley Chardonnay was known for great balance and good acidity.

In the early '70s, California wines started getting attention outside of the state. In 1976 a tasting in Paris was featured in Time Magazine after two Napa based wineries took top honors with their California wines. But a Sonoma newspaper revealed the rest of the story with this headline: "Napa didn't grow the famed grapes"¹.

Wine Spectator wrote about the winning Chardonnay: " the famous tasting where its 1973 Alexander Valley Chardonnay won a blind tasting, vanquishing competition that included white Burgundies and other California Chardonnays".² Incredibly, one tasting in France brought worldwide attention to California Chardonnay and the Alexander Valley just as Hank Wetzel was getting ready to release his first wines.



Prior to starting the winery, Hank apprenticed at top Chardonnay producers including Freemark Abbey, Stony Hill and Hanzell.

In 1975 he crushed our estate Chardonnay grapes for the first vintage at AVV's newly bonded winery.

Decades later, our Estate Chardonnay continues to showcase the unique place we call home and receives accolades from wine drinkers and critics across the country.

(First vintage at AVV in 1975)

So do you still think Alexander Valley Vineyards is only about red wine?