



## The Local Legend Whose Laziness Pays Off

This is the closest you'll get to Grand Cru Chablis in the Golden State. The 2017 La Luke Chardonnay is characterized by its tantalizing nuance, opening with aromas of golden apple, quince, fresh morning dew, toasted nuts, and baking spice. The palate is even more focused with delicate citrus, oyster shell minerality, and a fresh acidity that provides an energetic lift to the ripe fruit and restrained oak. It's that classic Burgundian structure that will allow 2017 La Luke to cellar up to a decade. How many California Chardonnays can you say that about?

With Wine Spectator Top 100 winemaker Stéphane Vivier behind it, this wine always sells out immediately in any vintage—mostly before it even has a chance to leave the area!

A brilliant winemaker and consultant for high profile properties like Hyde de Villaine, the combined effort of Napa's historic Hyde family and Aubert de Villaine of Burgundy's legendary Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, Vivier was hand-picked by Aubert himself to impart the strictest French techniques on their Californian wines.

Perhaps even more notably, Vivier was recently named head winemaker for Stony Hill, the historic estate that's worshipped by the wine industry insiders (ourselves included) for Napa's finest, most age-worthy Chardonnays characterized by their clean, acid-driven style.

Vivier's genius with Chardonnay has been long established locally, but it's about to reverberate globally with his new appointment. Yet the Burgundy native's modesty is almost as reliably charming as his wines. His affable, self-deprecating demeanor makes it easy to forget his formidable credentials, especially when he jokes, "I am a lazy winemaker."

We've never believed him. Especially after tasting his 2017 La Luke Chardonnay—a wine that could easily be mistaken for a classic white Burgundy but for its serious California swagger.

But we know what he's implying. In Burgundy, the most exalted winemakers are indeed known for their laissez-faire approach, allowing the alchemy of nature to do what it does best. Or if you ask Vivier, "lazy winemaking."

La Luke is Vivier's passion project with proprietor Lynn Larson, whose Carneros clay soils are uniquely well-draining—they're thin and flecked with small rocks, much like what you'd find in Grand Cru Chablis. That, along with the foggy mornings and windy afternoons, create a perfect environment for slow-ripening Chardonnay, which is why the grapes are imbued with such delicate nuance and palpable minerality.

And with the near impossibility of finding Stony Hill on release (and with Hyde de Villaine Chardonnay commanding upwards of \$75), La Luke is the ultimate—in fact the only—way to experience a Stéphane Vivier Chardonnay for under \$60.

## Wine Access Tasting Notes

A vivacious medium golden color. Shows a level of Burgundian nuance and restraint, with aromas of golden apples, quince, petrichor, toasted nuts, and allspice. Focused and fresh on the palate, its vibrant acidity plays off its core of minerality, giving energetic lift to ripe fruits and a hint of spice. Lightly oaked, poised, and classy, this wine's subtlety belies an underlying structure that will allow for further improvement over the next decade. Drink now - 2029.



Wine Access

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