PENLEY ESTATE

2006 CHARDONNAY
TASTING NOTES

Release: February 2008 **Variety:** 100% Chardonnay

Area: Coonawarra

Analysis: 14.5% Alcohol, 6.74g/l Acid, pH 3.40 **Country:** Australia

Objective: The objective of the winemaker has been to create a crisp, young style wine with soft fruit flavours so it can be consumed now, but the fine acid length and mellow French oak will aid bottle maturation (1-3 years from vintage date.)

The Wine: The colour is medium yellow with touches of grapey green. An aroma is emphasised by melon and grassy fruit with a hint of soft French oak. The flavours are soft and smooth with lingering melon fruits. The oak is subtle but discernible, enhancing the grape flavours, without overpowering them. This white wine shows complexity even though there has been no malolactic fermentation, even so the wine is soft but crisp, with the accent on fresh fruit characters, rather than buttery richness. The 2006 vintage has produced a stylish wine with soft fruit flavours. The overall impression is one of soft, discernible fruit with a clean acid and subtle oak background. An elegant cool-climate style. Complexity of flavour, oak and acid make this an excellent food wine. The finely tuned acids allow crispness that many New World Chardonnays lack. Fruit flavour is not dominated, but enhanced, by oak.

The Oak: Penley's style is based on the harmony of oak and fruit. However it is important to have subtle oak not dominant oak, which has always been the objective in making this wine. Fermentation of a percentage of this wine in specially selected oak is essential, with a portion kept in a stainless steel tank. The oak adds dimension and structure to the wine, not overt and buttery notes.

Vintage Comment: Budburst was early and dry, warm spring weather followed which resulted in early flowering. Summer was dry with warm to hot days and cool nights. About half way through the vintage the weather changed to more mild to warm days and cool nights. This weather pattern slowed the ripening of the grapes and enabled us to hang the fruit on the vine longer which intensified the flavours, tannins and colours of our red varieties.

Penley's Winemaking Style: The balance is a key feature in all Penley Wines. This ensures that this Chardonnay will mature successfully in bottle, but with rich Australian flavours can be enjoyed now whilst the fruits are youthful. Quality new French oak, barrel fermentation, partial lees stirring and no MLF all contribute to the style. The wine is delicate but definite Chardonnay berry flavours. Key elements in the production of this wine is the hand picking and whole bunch pressing of portions of the fruit, resulting the vibrant fruit characters that are evident. We also used wild yeast to develop complexity along with the lees stirring for depth.

Awards: Awards are now generally given to wines already bottled and labelled. Hence any awards are more likely in the year of sale.

Total Awards Since First Release (1989): 1 Trophy nomination, 7 Gold, 20 Silver, 62 Bronze, 1 Commended, 6x90+points. Donna Hay Magazine Annual Wine Awards 2004 - Best Chardonnay over $15.