



FESS PARKER SANDFORD AND BENEDICT CHARDONNAY 2024

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Santa Barbara, 90 minutes' drive north of Los Angeles, is perhaps the most exciting source of top-quality Pinot Noir and Chardonnay in the USA. The region's valleys open out directly onto the Pacific Ocean, whose cooling influence moderates the warm Californian days. Areas like Santa Rita Hills can produce rich yet taut and mineral Chardonnays that are frequently mistaken for white Burgundy in blind tastings, as well as world-class complex Pinots that blend ripeness and immediate appeal with finesse and balance.

Leading wine writer Antonio Galloni recently wrote this about Santa Barbara:

"I was blown away by what I tasted. Blown away. The purity of the fruit, the expression of place, the clear voice of a vintage – all the hallmarks of the world's greatest wines and regions – they were all there"

Fess Parker was a Hollywood actor best known for his portrayal of frontiersman Davy Crockett. In 1988 he purchased a ranch in Santa Barbara, on what is now known as the Foxen Wine Trail, and the first vines were planted a year later. The winery rapidly developed a great reputation, with wines served at US Presidential events. They were the driving force behind the recognition of Santa Rita Hills as a wine region of the highest quality and remain the outstanding winery of the area

Still family owned, today talented winemaker Blair Fox explores the various terroirs of Santa Barbara and the nuances of Pinot Noir through a series of single vineyard

and single clone releases. In addition they make exceptional Chardonnays as well as working with Rhône varieties, from the Sta. Rita Hills and Santa Maria Valley AVAs. The vineyards are run with a light touch, with natural soil and pest management employed for minimal disruption to the local environment. This remains one of the finest producers of the region.

The Sandford and Benedict vineyard was planted in 1971 and is one of California's most important and historical Chardonnay vineyards. This fabulous white wine is fermented and aged in 36% new French oak for 8 months and this is as good as Chardonnay gets from this region, with sophisticated creamy nectarine and hazelnut flavours; rich yet refined with saline, mineral acidity. Precise with great complexity.

