

2023 Monte Christo Winery Chardonnay

The Monte Christo Winery is in Clyde—a quaint and, for me, romantic little town in Central Otago. There are several beautiful towns in the area that fit this description, and Clyde is certainly among them. So, this 2023 Chardonnay is restrained, with white flowers, orchard fruits and brine. In the mouth, the wine is equally sophisticated and elegant, with saline acidity, delicate fruit and a spool of chalky phenolics through the finish. It's quiet and attractive. The handpicked fruit is sourced from two vineyards in the Alexandra Basin, one of the driest areas in Central Otago, and it's a mix of three clones: clone 6 (35%), a mystery clone (34%) and 548 (31%). It underwent 100% malolactic fermentation and matured for 11 months in a combination of neutral French oak (72%) and stainless steel (28%). I like this wine, and I like the place too. 13% alcohol, sealed under screw cap.

- Erin Larkin (November, 2024)