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# Charles & Charles

## 2015 CHARDONNAY COLUMBIA VALLEY, WASHINGTON

### THE VINTAGE

Coming off of two rather hot vintages, 2015 was warmer still setting the record for the warmest vintage on record in Washington State. Spring started earlier with bud break ahead of schedule, ripening Chardonnay early yet evenly.

### THE WINEMAKING

We've been so pleased with the results of our Chardonnay program over the last two vintages that we kept on that tack again this year with only some subtle adjustments. The 2015 vintage remains very much a cooler climate, Mâconnais-style Chardonnay with white fruit and minerality, but with warmer vineyard sites selected so there is power and a fullness as well. There is a touch more barrel influence with the 2015, ramping up from 20% barrel-fermented and aged to 23%, with the remaining wine fermented and aged in stainless steel. All lots were on their lees for 8 months with monthly lees stirring and also went through malolactic fermentation. The overall fermentation process contributes a beautiful richness, with a small portion of the fruit fermented separately using native yeast to add depth and complexity.

An additional adjustment to the 2015 vintage to further develop more interesting and complex flavors in the bottle was a shift back to natural cork from a screw cap, also contributing to a richer fullness.

### THE WINE

A firm, juicy, refreshing Chardonnay that picks up great power and depth in your glass. There are aromas of apple and pear with some tropical notes. Fresh and pure fruit on the palate with a streak of minerality and toasty vanilla. Sur lie aging gives the wine sweetness and softness. Power meets finesse here.

- ★ **PH** – 3.68
- ★ **RS** – .22g/L
- ★ **ALC** – 13.8%

### THE TERROIR

All of the fruit was grown in the Columbia Valley AVA from 3 principal vineyards: Evergreen / Ancient Lakes (65%), Shaw High River (30%), and Moxee (5%).

### THE PROJECT

A collaboration founded in 2008 between Wine Enthusiast Magazine 2014 Winemaker of the year, Charles Smith (K Vintners, Charles Smith Wines) and Charles Bieler (Three Thieves, BIELER Pere et Fils & Gotham Project). We make five wines together: the Rosé, a Cabernet Sauvignon Blend, a Chardonnay, a single vineyard Riesling, and a Merlot Blend.