

# **Margins ‘Skin Fermented Chenin Blanc’ 2021**

**Producer** - Megan Bell

**Provenance:** Clarksburg AVA, California

**Grape(s):** 100% Chenin Blanc

**Vineyard:** Wilson Vineyard - 20 acres of Chenin began conversion to organic practices in 2017. Alluvial, loam soils.

**Vintage:** “I don’t know if I’ll have a vintage that good in my career again,” Megan says of the spectacular 2021 wines. A cold summer meant a month longer hang time for better flavor development and grape chemistry for easy fermentations and great quality.

**Fermentation/ Aging:** Destemmed and skin fermented in open topped, steel vats for 23 days before pressing into barrel for 5 months lees aging.

**Fining/ filtration:** none.

**Sulfite:** 18 ppm added in October and another 20 ppm added a week before bottling.



## **The Producer:**

“Complicated things don’t really interest me,” muses winemaker Megan Bell, “I want wine to be thought of as something that’s very not complicated - that’s something that affected me a lot at the beginning.” Megan’s interest in wine grew out of high-school brewing experiments to studies at UC Davis. From the beginning she found the pall of mystery that hung over wine to be discouraging and totally unnecessary. Her project, initially funded through a crowdsourcing campaign, is dedicated to the less evangelized regions of California and their scrappy mom ‘n pop vineyards.

## **The Vineyard:**

The Chenin Blanc comes from Wilson Vineyard in Clarksburg, planted in 1998. When Megan got started in 2016 she was relatively unknown and freshly returned from a transformative experience in the Loire that had her fixated on getting ahold of some Chenin Blanc. Initially, she was cold calling vineyards and getting almost no response until a few growers in Clarksburg responded to her. Of them, David Ogilvie was the one she connected best with. Although the sprawling 100 acre farm isn’t organic, David agreed to try the 20 acre block of Chenin Blanc as an organic pilot project. Megan helps farm the rows she pulls from and as of 2020 this part of the vineyard is fully organic.

Clarksberg is an ancient flood plane located on the Sacramento River before it meets the delta, surrounded by streams and rivers. Levies were erected in the 1930's, effectively creating a network of islands. Though located in the hot central valley, this area is where the waters of the Sierras flow giving the area an almost Loire-like quality. Wilson Vineyard is on Meritt Island and boasts the same silty, fertile soils that makes Clarksberg home to the greatest acreage of Chenin Blanc in California.

“I don't know if I'll have a vintage that good in my career again,” Megan says of the spectacular 2021 wines. A cold summer meant a month longer hang time for better flavor development and grape chemistry for easy fermentations and great quality.

### **The Winery:**

The skin fermented Chenin Blanc has been a labor of love for Megan. “It's hard to do skin fermented whites,” she says “I just keep learning more and more how to do it.” Destemmed fruit is skin fermented and macerated in steel for a total of 23 days in open-topped, steel vats with manual punch downs once a day before pressing into neutral barrel. After 5 months aging, base wines are racked into tank bottled a week after without fining or filtration. Megan is keenly sensitive to mouse so for this, her most challenging wine, she adds 18 ppm in October and another 20 ppm just before bottling.

**For more details email [info@OlmsteadWine.com](mailto:info@OlmsteadWine.com)**

**OLMSTEAD  
WINE CO.**