

**Rancho Arroyo Grande Winery & Vineyard****2004 Chardonnay, *Estate Grown*
(Arroyo Grande Valley)**

Rancho Arroyo Grande is a 4,000 acre ranch on California's Central Coast that was originally a Spanish land grant. Today 200 acres are planted to vineyards. The soil here has rich deposits of fossilized oysters, gravel, sand, and limestone. Days are warm and nights are cool - the diurnal variation is 40 to 50 degrees - so grapes ripen at a slow, leisurely pace. This particular Chardonnay, of which only 461 cases were produced, comes from the sandy Thereza vineyard. The winemaker whole-cluster pressed for maximum fruit extraction, and it shows. Later it underwent 100% malolactic fermentation in French oak, and then was aged sur lie in 20 percent new French oak for 12

months.

It is bright and golden yellow with well-marked legs. As expected from the fruit source and winemaking technique, this wine is very opulent. It has aromas of buttered popcorn, mango, peach nectar, guava, starfruit, cantaloupe, cinnamon, and vanilla extract. On the palate it is rich, viscous, and fruit forward with vibrant tropical and orange zest notes. It is soft and creamy with pleasing underlying tingly acidity for lift and balance. The finish is long and fruity with notes of violets.

Reviewed August 23, 2007 by [Catherine Fallis](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Rancho Arroyo Grande Winery & Vineyard](#)

Vineyard: Estate Grown

Vintage: 2004

Wine: Chardonnay

Appellation: [Arroyo Grande Valley](#)

Grape: [Chardonnay](#)

Price: \$15.00

THE REVIEWER**Catherine Fallis**

Founder and President of Planet Grape LLC, a company committed to bringing the joy of wine, food, and good living into the lives of everyday people, Catherine is creator of the "grape goddess guides to good living," a series of books, television presentations,

seminars, and e-learning programs. The fifth woman in the world to become a Master Sommelier, grape goddess Catherine Fallis is still very much down-to-earth.