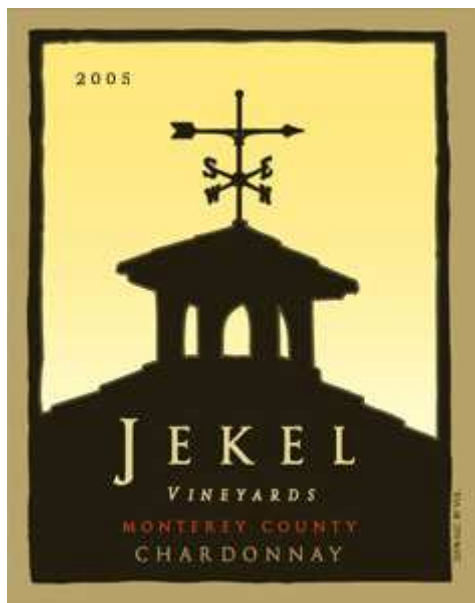


**WINE RECOMMENDATION**

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**Jekel Vineyards****2005 Chardonnay  
(Monterey County)**

Jekel Vineyards, founded in 1972 in the Greenfield area, started producing wine in 1978. It's since been sold to Brown-Forman Corp., the parent company of Fetzer Vineyards, which closed the Jekel winery in 2004. But the brand lives on, focusing on the Central Coast, particularly Monterey.

More than half the grapes that go into this wine were from the old Jekel estate vineyards in the Arroyo Seco AVA. Winemaker Charlie Gilmore has shown admirable restraint in making this fresh, tasty Chardonnay, which sells for \$12. A little more than half the wine was fermented in stainless steel, while the rest was fermented in

oak barrels. Just 15 percent of the blend underwent malolactic fermentation. A small portion of the wine was aged for seven months in new French oak, while most of it was aged in older barrels. What Gilmore has produced is an intensely aromatic wine – I wondered whether there was a little Gewurztraminer in the blend, but it's 100 percent Chardonnay – that's both crisp and rich. It offers flavors of lemon and green apple, along with some nice creamy notes. Gilmore suggests drinking this Chardonnay with fresh fish or crab from Monterey Bay.

Reviewed May 7, 2007 by [Laurie Daniel](#).

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**THE WINE**

**Winery:** [Jekel Vineyards](#)

**Vintage:** 2005

**Wine:** Chardonnay

**Appellation:** [Monterey County](#)

**Grape:** Chardonnay

**Price:** \$11.99

**THE REVIEWER****Laurie Daniel**

Laurie Daniel, wine columnist for the *San Jose Mercury News*, has been reviewing wine for more than 10 years. She doesn't use numbers, preferring to describe her recommended wines and let consumers decide for themselves.

Laurie believes that bigger isn't necessarily better; she's partial to wines of balance, finesse and character. Her particular interests are Pinot Noir (versions that really taste like Pinot, that is) and aromatic whites like Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling and Gewürztraminer.