

**Carmela Vineyards****2003 Chardonnay - Lewis & Clark Bicentennial (1804-1806)
(Idaho)**

Idaho's first officially recognized appellation, the Snake River Valley, was only approved as an AVA in 2007, though grape growing in this upland basin area is much more established than the TTB's official nod would indicate. Carmela Vineyards owner Roger Jones has been growing grapes here since 1988, and not surprisingly, the winery is dedicated to locally grown fruit, with a winemaking program that is 100% Idaho grown, including its winemaker, Idaho born Neil Glancey. In addition to working with local growers, Carmela has 48 acres of estate vineyards, planted to Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Chardonnay, and Riesling.

This special bottling, first released in 2006 to mark the 200th anniversary of Lewis & Clark's Expedition, predates the AVA's approval, so the label

carries a more generic "Idaho" state designation.

This Chardonnay has a rather quirky style – a decided departure from the more modish heavily extracted, very ripe and tropical, hit-the-sweet-spot style that is so popular today. Oh no, this wine is for a different crowd – those that still appreciate a Chardonnay that steps forward with steely minerality as its best foot. If you're in this camp, you'll enjoy the wet wool, flint and briny sea air qualities of this wine that are somewhat reminiscent of good Chablis from the best Kimmeridgian soils of that venerable French region. The fruit character of this Chardonnay is subdued, but does offer fresh stone fruit aromas and flavors, namely pear and apple. At a sensibly moderate 12% alcohol, the wine comes off as lightly textured with a very dry, crisp finish – it's a wine that you can actually enjoy more than one glass of.

Reviewed March 24, 2008 by [Adam Dial](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Carmela Vineyards](#)

Vintage: 2003

Wine: Chardonnay - Lewis & Clark Bicentennial
(1804-1806)

Appellation: Idaho

Grape: Chardonnay

Price: \$13.99

THE REVIEWER**Adam Dial**

Adam Dial is co-founder and Managing Editor of Appellation America. Brought up in a family with winery ventures in both California and Canada, he seeks and appreciates diversity and individuality in wines. He is a Sommelier with more than two

decades of experience in the hospitality and service industry, and is a respected wine educator, judge and industry advisor.