

WINE RECOMMENDATION

**Villa Mt. Eden Winery****2004 Grand Reserve Chardonnay, Bien Nacido Vineyard
(Santa Maria Valley)**

Who knew Villa Mount Eden sourced fruit from Bien Nacido Vineyard in Santa Maria Valley? Trust me, a number of insiders know, and they (as well as I) have been buying this Chardonnay bottling for years. Sometimes, in very ripe years, the tropical fruit, coupled with the Villa Mt. Eden winemaking regime, is a little over the top for me. But 2004 was a good

year for Bien Nacido Chardonnay, not a great one. Consequently, this version is more restrained and more refined than usual, though nothing is missing here but the usual dollop of excess.

Make no mistake though, there is plenty of tropical fruit to go around on the nose as well as creme brulee from the toasted barrels. The flavors of well modulated tropical fruit include citrus, mango, papaya and pineapple, all wrapped up in a vanilla custard like package. Even though this harvest had good hang time ripeness, the wine finishes dry and compactly, with no lingering sweetness. Structurally this one is also hung on a fine framework with totally supporting acidity. And, for a well made Chard, from Bien Nacido fruit, you can't beat the price.

Reviewed August 23, 2007 by [Dennis Schaefer](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Villa Mt. Eden Winery](#)

Vineyard: [Bien Nacido Vineyard](#)

Vintage: 2004

Wine: [Grand Reserve Chardonnay](#)

Appellation: [Santa Maria Valley](#)

Grape: [Chardonnay](#)

Price: \$13.00

THE REVIEWER**Dennis Schaefer**

Dennis Schaefer has been tasting and writing about wine for over 30 years, propelled by a continuing curiosity and burgeoning enthusiasm for discovering what's in the bottle. Blessed with catholic tastes, he enjoys everything from the obvious to the sublime. A

major requirement is that the vineyard, winery and winemaker consistently perform well and fulfill their potential. Balance, concentration and complexity are key to the tasting experience but, in the end, the purpose of wine is simply to give pleasure.