

**Bel Lago Winery & Vineyards****2005 Chardonnay, Estate
(Leelanau Peninsula)**

When owner/winemaker Charles Edson first planted grapes on his family farm in 1987, he established a variety testing vineyard of about one acre. From results of this test plot, Edson subsequently chose the best varieties and expanded to nearly 30 planted vineyard acres today. Now, from one of Leelanau Peninsula AVA's most exciting vintages to date, the 2005 Bel Lago Estate Bottled Chardonnay is a notable example of classic cool climate Chardonnay with a beautifully balanced oak presence.

Sporting floral aromas enhanced by a citrus fruit mélange and recognizable tangerine scent, it captivates with a true note of ripe apples. Flavors mirror the aromas with intriguing vanilla touches. Well balanced in fruit, acidity and oak, it's a lovely wine that brings the taster back time and time again to discover the aroma and flavor nuances.

Its creamy finish with attractive vanilla and toasty oak marks the cellar regime including barrel fermentation and sur lie aging in French oak. If you've tired of overtly oaked, fruit bomb Chardonnays, here's a wine with elegance and finish and all the cool climate lively characters, often talked about but rarely delivered. It's delicious with lobster, creamy risotto or delicate poached fish.

Reviewed February 26, 2007 by [Eleanor & Ray Heald](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Bel Lago Winery & Vineyards](#)

Vineyard: Estate

Vintage: 2005

Wine: Chardonnay

Appellation: [Leelanau Peninsula](#)

Grape: Chardonnay

Price: \$18.00

THE REVIEWER**Eleanor & Ray Heald**

The Healds have been writing about wine since 1978 and have focused on appellation significance in many of their world beat writings. They value recognizing site personality (*terroir*) within an appellation's wines. They praise balance and elegance in wines styled to pair well with food and eschew over-extraction, high alcohol and heavy-handed oak. "Delicious" is their favorite descriptor for a great, well-made wine.