

**A Donkey and Goat Winery****2005 Chardonnay, Brosseau Vineyard
(Chalone)**

Jared and Stacey Brandt of A Donkey and Goat winery in Berkeley have a very European sensibility when it comes to wine. For one thing, they are very particular about the acidity in their wines. That's led to an unusual method for making this Chardonnay from the Chalone AVA.

They love the minerality they get from the Brosseau Vineyard, but they found that the acid levels in the grapes would drop before the flavors were mature. Rather than just add acidity in the winery, they devised an ingenious process: Right after veraison, long before the grapes are ripe, they harvest 2 to 3 percent of the crop. They press the grapes – which is difficult, because the grapes at the level of development are on the hard side – then refrigerate the very tart juice (which is like verjus used in cooking) until the rest of the crop can be harvested. The tart juice is blended in before fermentation. The resulting wine, which sells for \$40, is lean, racy and Chablis-like, with lemon and mineral flavors. It's still very tight and would benefit from more time in the bottle.

Reviewed March 15, 2007 by [Laurie Daniel](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [A Donkey and Goat Winery](#)

Vineyard: Brosseau Vineyard

Vintage: 2005

Wine: Chardonnay

Appellation: [Chalone](#)

Grape: [Chardonnay](#)

Price: \$40.00

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.