



About the Winery and its Founders

Claiborne & Churchill is a small, premium family-owned winery in the Edna Valley, founded in 1983 by Claiborne (Clay) Thompson and Fredericka Churchill Thompson. Former teachers at the University of Michigan, the couple left the “Groves of Academe” for the vineyards of California in 1981 in order to begin a new life in the wine industry.

With its first crush Claiborne & Churchill announced its special focus, producing 565 cases of Dry Riesling and Dry Gewürztraminer, inspired by the fruity but dry dinner wines of the French province of Alsace. Today Claiborne & Churchill produces about 8,000 cases of wine each year, sourcing grapes from vineyards in the cool maritime valleys of California’s Central Coast and its own small estate vineyards.

About the Wines

At Claiborne & Churchill, traditional European winemaking techniques prevail, including extensive use of barrel fermentation and barrel-aging as well as minimal manipulation of juice and wine. The resulting wines have a pleasing balance of fruit and oak, good structure and smooth texture. The varietal character and flavor of the grape, together with a famously dry finish, make these wines excel at the dinner table.

Claiborne & Churchill now produces many other wines in small lots that are sold only at the winery, but Dry Riesling, Dry Gewürztraminer and Pinot Noir, the signature wines, are sold nationwide and can be found in the finest restaurants and retail shops. All the wines have been recognized for outstanding quality, winning gold medals at national and international competitions.

About Green Building and Sustainability

The wine cellar and tasting room at Claiborne & Churchill, built by the family in 1995, is a pioneering example of environmental architecture. This “straw bale” winery building is the first of its kind, with 16-inch thick walls made of rice straw, and maintains a constant cellar temperature throughout the year without mechanical heating or cooling. In 2011, it was honored with a Green Building Award by the US Green Building Council.

About the Vineyard

In 2010, our estate vineyard (Claiborne Vineyard) was officially certified by the Central Coast Vineyard Team’s Sustainability in Practice (SIP)TM Vineyard Certification. An accredited, 3rd party inspector verifies our vineyard practices through an in-depth records and on-site audit, and certification is granted by an independent Advisory Committee.

In keeping with this philosophy, Claiborne & Churchill is committed to conserving and protecting our environment, treating our employees, neighbors and community with care while maintaining sound business practices.

CLAIBORNE &
CHURCHILL
V I N E R Y

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