



# Platinum Wine Club

90+ Rated, Ultra Premium, Collectable Wines from California's Best Winemakers.

## Carte Blanche | Napa Valley

When your family has owned and operated some of the greatest Bordeaux châteaux for nearly a hundred years and you have developed a great affliction for wine on your own, what's a person to do in such a situation?

Why, you would naturally design and operate your own boutique California winery, correct?

Such is the case with Nick Allen. His great, great grandfather was none other than the late Clarence Dillion, a half-French American financier whose love for French wine caused him to purchase France's oldest operating château, Château Haut-Brion, another Bordeaux masterpiece. These wines have consistently been placed among France's greatest wine treasures.

Nick Allen grew up in New Jersey and learned agriculture from his late grandmother. "For some reason, I've always felt destined to wind up in the wine business," declared Allen. "When I was growing up and even today, many people referred to me as 'the wine guy.' The family stories about our involvement in the French wine industry were legendary and always piqued my imagination."

After attending the University of Denver, Nick Allen spent nearly ten years dabbling in real estate and starting a family. But, the wine bug kept calling and Allen finally gave in. He became a close friend of noted French-born winemaker Luc Morlet, gifted craftsman at the celebrated Peter Michael Winery of Knights Valley, Sonoma County fame.

Morlet became Nick Allen's inspiration and he even offered a name for his new winery. "He would always tell me, 'You have *carte blanche* to do whatever you want with this.' As time went by, I liked the way the name resonated, so I decided it would be Carte Blanche Winery for me."

Carte Blanche made its first release in 2008 with an initial production of just under 750 cases. The wines debuted with excellent press and high scores from both competitions and periodicals. The new winery was well on its way to success.

In the twelve years since its inception, Carte Blanche has slowly grown to its present production level of around 1,200 cases. Nick Allen is a devotee of terroir and prides himself on producing wines inspired by Old World French winemaking mores.

He is also dedicated to finding vineyard sites that display particular identities that can be passed on through the resultant wines that are produced.

Nick Allen is particularly fond of his proprietary blends (red and white). He counts these wines as particularly accessible on the palate, a factor in wine/food integration that is often neglected in favor of wine style or taste preference.

Carte Blanche Winery is also a friend of multiple appellations and fruit is chosen on the basis of quality and not by a specific location.

Some six years ago, Allen handed over the winemaking chores to Helen Keplinger, a noted winemaker in her own right. Keplinger is a UC Davis grad and boasts stints with the likes of the iconic Heidi Barrett, and also Kathy Joseph (Fiddlehead Cellars), Michel Rolland (Harlan Estate, Dalla Valle) and David Abreu (Kenzo Estate, Abreu Vineyards). She also has extensive international experience with the noted Cellars Melis of the Spanish Priorat growing region just outside Barcelona.

Allen also credits his wife Teil (they met at the University of Denver) who is an accomplished chef and musical enthusiast (Tampa's Gasparilla Music Festival). "Teil is incredible in pairing wine and food," remarked Nick Allen. "She understands food subtleties and the effect wine has on certain dishes. Our mission at Carte Blanche Winery is to provide incredible taste experiences with our wines and Teil is an integral part of our winemaking process and decisions."

Nick Allen's next project is to find a permanent location in Napa Valley for his Carte Blanche Winery. "I know what I am looking for," he finalized. "It must be a good location with decent traffic flow. I am not looking for anything grandiose, but I need a place large enough to put a small winery and an inviting tasting room. I want the people who visit to be really comfortable when tasting our wines and appreciate the quality and care that Carte Blanche has to offer. After all, it's all about the people, isn't it?"

Allen calls his wines "his babies" and is a unique winery owner. If passion and persistence have anything to do with success, then Nick Allen and Carte Blanche Winery are well on their way. It is our pleasure to introduce Carte Blanche to our *Platinum Wine Club* members. Enjoy!



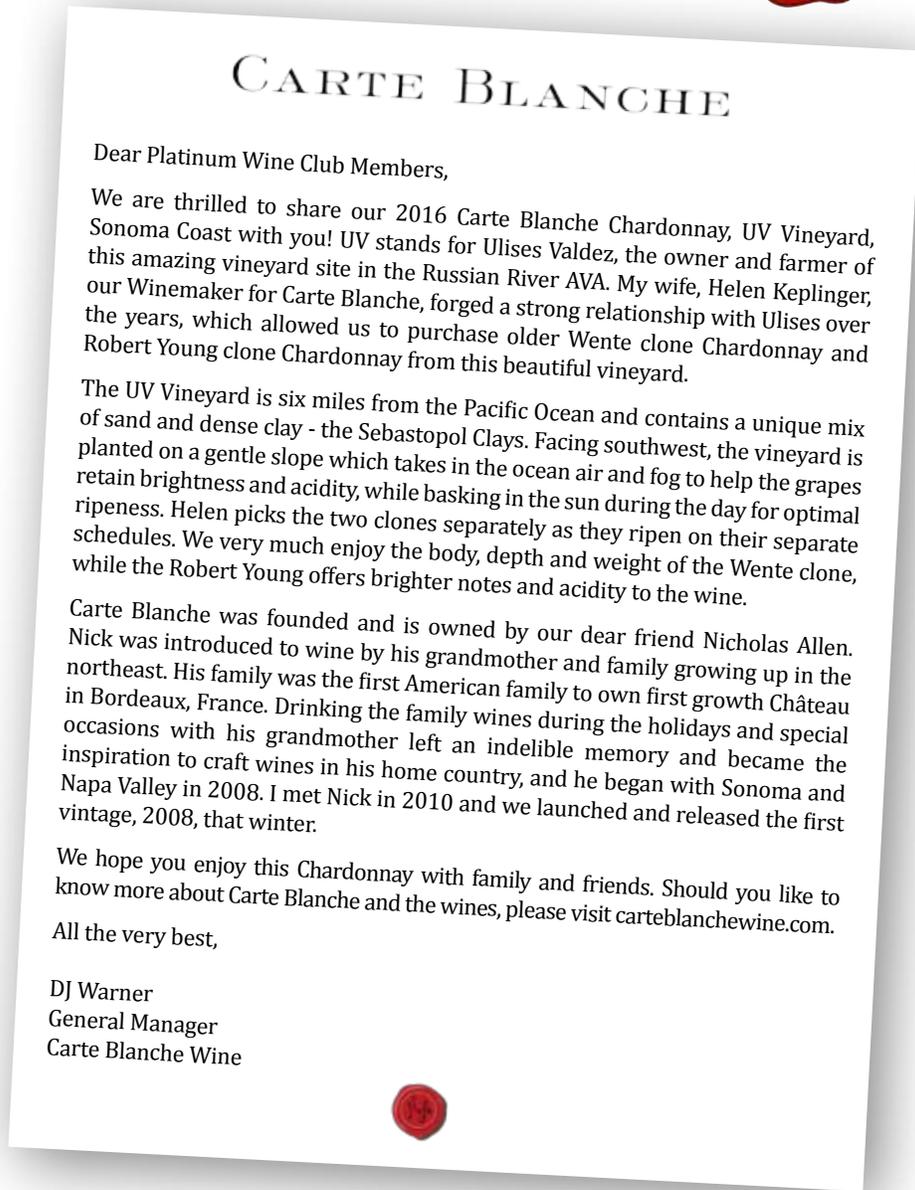


**96 POINTS**

— *Jeb Dunnuck*

**200 cases produced**

Carte Blanche's 2016 Chardonnay comes from the renowned UV Vineyard on California's Sonoma Coast. The property is owned and farmed by the one and only, Ulises Valdez, and it is home to the longtime prized Chardonnay clones of Wente and Robert Young. This bottling brings both clones together, creating a beautiful wine with everything we love about Chardonnay - depth, weight, finesse, brightness - all in seamless harmony. On the nose, layers of brioche, citrus blossom, oyster shell and quince come together in a bright and inviting introduction. The palate is focused with bright acidity and a full body, showing plenty of length and notes of crushed rock, brioche, Bartlett pear and lemon curd along the way. This is a gorgeous wine that you will love to share with friends and family. Aged 18 months in oak. 100% Chardonnay. Enjoy!



CARTE BLANCHE

Dear Platinum Wine Club Members,

We are thrilled to share our 2016 Carte Blanche Chardonnay, UV Vineyard, Sonoma Coast with you! UV stands for Ulises Valdez, the owner and farmer of this amazing vineyard site in the Russian River AVA. My wife, Helen Keplinger, our Winemaker for Carte Blanche, forged a strong relationship with Ulises over the years, which allowed us to purchase older Wente clone Chardonnay and Robert Young clone Chardonnay from this beautiful vineyard.

The UV Vineyard is six miles from the Pacific Ocean and contains a unique mix of sand and dense clay - the Sebastopol Clays. Facing southwest, the vineyard is planted on a gentle slope which takes in the ocean air and fog to help the grapes retain brightness and acidity, while basking in the sun during the day for optimal ripeness. Helen picks the two clones separately as they ripen on their separate schedules. We very much enjoy the body, depth and weight of the Wente clone, while the Robert Young offers brighter notes and acidity to the wine.

Carte Blanche was founded and is owned by our dear friend Nicholas Allen. Nick was introduced to wine by his grandmother and family growing up in the northeast. His family was the first American family to own first growth Château in Bordeaux, France. Drinking the family wines during the holidays and special occasions with his grandmother left an indelible memory and became the inspiration to craft wines in his home country, and he began with Sonoma and Napa Valley in 2008. I met Nick in 2010 and we launched and released the first vintage, 2008, that winter.

We hope you enjoy this Chardonnay with family and friends. Should you like to know more about Carte Blanche and the wines, please visit [carteblanchewine.com](http://carteblanchewine.com).

All the very best,

DJ Warner  
General Manager  
Carte Blanche Wine



**INSTANT  
Membership Rewards Pricing\***

Winery Retail Price \$65.00/btl.	2+ btls.	6+ btls.	12+ btls.
2-Bottle Members:	\$52.00	\$50.33	\$49.50
4-Bottle Members:	\$52.00	\$49.50	\$48.25

**You Save 20% to 26%  
off Winery Retail Price**



**Add a Plus! Bottle to your next wine delivery  
\$45-\$55 per delivery**

The Plus! Program automatically adds on one special wine to each regularly scheduled wine delivery, or as often as you like! Plus! wines are all highly-rated, very small production wines with availability too limited for all regular club members to receive. For more information, visit: [GoldMedalWineClub.com/plus](http://GoldMedalWineClub.com/plus)

**This month's Platinum Plus!  
Featured Wine:**

**Thacher 2016 'Normal Deviation'  
Zinfandel/Petite Sirah,  
Paso Robles**

92 Points - *CA Grapevine*  
210 Cases Produced

Shipping and tax (if applicable) not included in above prices.  
\*Effective per bottle prices after Membership Rewards discount is applied at checkout. Membership Rewards does not apply to Sale or Special-Offer Wines.