



APPELLATION: SONOMA COAST
VARIETAL BLEND: 100% PINOT NOIR
WINEMAKERS: MATTHEW RORICK & SPENCER GRAHAM
RELEASE DATE: WINTER 2009

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Dense, dark carmine red in color laced with seductive aromas of ripe Bing cherry, black plum, incense, clove, lavender and laurel which erupt from the glass in an exuberant, complex bouquet. Plush and luxuriant on the palate, this Pinot Noir exhibits round, supple tannins framing a taut balance of natural acidity and voluptuous fruit. Flavors of sweet cherry and blackberry dominate with notes of rich spice and earth and a hint of smoked meat which presages a crisp, clean finish. This is a wine of finesse and restraint which will evolve in complexity with judicious cellaring.

WINEMAKING

In every vineyard, there are small sections or blocks which produce fruit that is a cut above for reasons which can range from better soil to more advantageous sun exposure. In these sections, we allowed our Pinot Noir to ripen a bit longer than the rest of the vineyard. We found that the vines in these optimal sections continued to increase in complexity without sacrificing natural acidity and tannins. Once harvested, this Block Seven fruit was carefully sorted by hand and then fermented in small lots with 25% whole clusters. Temperatures were kept cool at the beginning of the fermentation and then allowed to rise naturally in the traditional Burgundian fashion. The must was punched down by hand every day in order to gently extract more flavor and tannin from the grape skins. After fermentation, the free run wine was kept separate from the hard press and was aged in new French oak for 16 months. The wine was bottled unfinned and unfiltered in its natural state.

VINEYARDS

Our Block Seven Pinot Noir grapes are sourced from a vineyard located just north of San Pablo Bay on Lakeville Highway outside of Petaluma in southern Sonoma County. Cooling influences from the nearby bay converge with those from the Pacific Coast to create a particularly cool micro-climate which allows for a stellar expression of the variety. The Sonoma Coast appellation has become highly regarded as a superior area for the growing of world class Pinot Noir.

VINTAGE

The 2006 growing season in northern California was characterized by two distinct features, a spring with more than usual rain and a slightly cooler than normal summer. As a result, the grapes had an ideally paced development cycle with even ripening throughout. A lighter than usual crop load allowed the vines to develop at a uniform, steady pace so that each of the grape clusters reached optimum maturity. Clusters were very tight and berry sizes were larger than usual and, the Pinot Noir grapes were clean, ripe and quite flavorful. As a result, this Block Seven Pinot Noir is a true expression of the variety, featuring clean, pure flavors, ample structure and body, and balancing natural acidity.

Elizabeth Spencer

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