



WINEMAKER: Ken Brown

VINEYARD SOURCES: 64% Fiddlestix, 24% Cargasacchi and 12% Clos Pepe Vineyards, Santa Rita Hills. Recognized as an official AVA in 2001, the tiny Santa Rita Hills appellation is located in western Santa Ynez Valley where cool temperatures and marine fog make it ideal for premium Pinot Noir. The soils are low-fertility, well-drained sandy loam rich in calcareous matter, which contributes to the firm structure and pure fruit expression of the fruit.

VINTAGE: Harvest 2003 was one of the warmest vintages on record in the Santa Rita Hills and one of our earliest harvests ever. The growing season began with unseasonably warm temperatures that triggered budbreak in late January, nearly a month ahead of normal. Rain, wind and cool weather experienced during the May bloom period caused poor fruit set in some clusters and lightened yields. Summer temperatures were above average, but helped promote better natural balance in the naturally high acid Pinot Noir grown in the Santa Rita Hills.

WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS: Nearly 20 years ago, I made my first Pinot Noir from the Sanford and Benedict Vineyard, now known as the birthplace of the Santa Rita Hills appellation. I have always considered this region to be one of California's elite areas for exploring the highest potential of Pinot Noir.

This wine was crafted in the gentlest manner possible in a gravity flow environment. Clusters were destemmed, then immediately chilled for a pre-fermentation cold soak. During fermentation, extraction was enhanced by gently punching down the cap, taking care not to break any skins or seeds and risk harsh tannins. The wine aged nine months in French oak barrels including 30% new French oak.

Aromas of strawberry, plum blossoms, rose petals and blackberry are accented by a touch of smoke and nutmeg. Firm tannins surround a rich middle core of plum and cherry flavors. Bright acidity carries through to a long, plush finish.

TECHNICAL DATA

T.A.: 5.40 g/l

pH: 3.71

Alcohol: 14.5%

Sugg. Retail Price: \$35.00

Production: 367 cases