



WINEMAKER: Ken Brown

VINEYARD SOURCE: Clos Pepe Vineyard, Santa Rita Hills. This family-run estate is a small jewel in the highly regarded Santa Rita Hills appellation with only 28 acres of vines (24 of which are planted to Pinot Noir). The vineyard is farmed with meticulous attention to detail, year-round hand labor and sustainable agriculture methods. The soils are low-vigor, sandy loam and are rich in calcareous shale. The block sourced for Ken Brown Pinot Noir is planted to the Pommard clone.

VINTAGE: The 2004 vintage, characterized by an early start and a warm finish, produced wines of great richness and accessibility. Warm spring temperatures triggered an early budbreak to jumpstart the growing season. Cool conditions, which are characteristic of the region, prevailed for most of the summer until early September when a heat spell lasting more than a week forced us to pick the Clos Pepe Pinot Noir, as well as Pinot Noir from other Santa Rita Hills Vineyards, within a short window. In close cooperation with the grower, we were successful in harvesting our Pinot Noir in optimum condition.

WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS: These Pinot Noir grapes received the same careful handling in the cellar as they experienced in the Clos Pepe vineyards. Clusters were hand sorted before being de-stemmed and gravity fed to fermenters. The must was immediately chilled for a pre-fermentation cold soak where the most beneficial extraction of color, aroma and flavor occurs. During fermentation, concentration was enhanced by gently punching down the cap. As soon as the wine reached dryness, it was pressed and transferred to 60-gallon French oak barrels where it aged for 15 months. About 40% of the barrels were new French oak.

This Pinot Noir balances pure fruit expression with superb structure and rich tannins. Concentrated aromas of ripe blackberry and black plum combine with a touch of blueberry and black pepper. The flavors, including hints of blackberry and black licorice, are enveloped in an opulent mid-palate which culminates in a resonating finish. This wine promises excellent development of flavor and complexity with additional cellaring.

TECHNICAL DATA

T.A.: 5.86 g/l

pH: 3.58

Alcohol: 14.7%

Sugg. Retail Price: \$50.00

Production: 163 cases