



**WINEMAKER:** Ken Brown

**VINEYARD SOURCES:** 58% Sanford & Benedict Vineyard, 42% Clos Pepe Vineyard, Santa Rita Hills. This wine sources fruit from two of Santa Rita Hill's most prestigious vineyards. The Sanford & Benedict Pinot Noir comes from one of the older blocks of the vineyard, planted to the Mount Eden clone. Grapes from the Clos Pepe estate are from the north side of the slope, planted to the Pommard clone. Both vineyards are naturally low yielding—averaging 2.0 to 2.5 tons per acre—and exceptionally expressive, even in years with higher rainfall such as the 2005 growing season.

**VINTAGE:** The 2005 vintage was characterized by plentiful winter rainfall, mild temperatures and a gradual ripening of the grapes, which allowed us to pick each block at optimum maturity. Above average rainfall resulted in vigorous spring vine growth and healthy canopies. Growers helped keep yields in balance with careful farming, including shoot and cluster thinning and leaf pulling, to ensure excellent flavor development and concentration in the grapes. Temperatures throughout the growing season were characteristically cool with no prolonged heat spells. Pinot Noir from Sanford & Benedict was harvested on September 26, while fruit from Clos Pepe Vineyard was picked on September 21.

**WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS:** This wine owes its complexity to the pleasing marriage of fruit from these two exceptional vineyards. Clusters were destemmed, then immediately chilled for a pre-fermentation cold soak where the most beneficial extraction of color, aroma and flavor occurs. During fermentation, extraction was enhanced by gently punching down the cap twice a day. The wine aged 15 months in French oak barrels, including 30% new French oak.

This wine combines aromas of dark plum and blackberry, contributed by the Clos Pepe Pinot Noir, with hints of red cherry, earth tones and brown spice, attributable to the Sanford & Benedict fruit. The texture is opulent and complex, interlaced with a fine thread of elegant tannins. The wine's natural acidity and smooth tannins work together, providing a distinctive freshness in the wine. The wine finishes silky and soft.

#### **TECHNICAL DATA**

T.A.: 5.4 g/l

pH: 3.70

Alcohol: 14.3%

Sugg. Retail Price: \$40.00

Production: 540 cases