



WINEMAKER: Ken Brown

VINEYARD SOURCE: Cargasacchi Vineyard, Santa Rita Hills. This small 16-acre vineyard has become one of the stars of the Santa Rita Hills appellation. Planted in 1998, the property features Clone 115 Pinot Noir planted on 3309 rootstock. The vineyard is located at the extreme west end of Santa Rita Hills, where its proximity to the Pacific Ocean makes it one of the coolest vineyards in California. The soil type is the Botella Series, a composition of both clay and loam that has a fairly high calcareous content, which drains well and helps moderate yields.

VINTAGE: 2008 was a standout vintage, especially for Pinot Noir. Yields were below normal due in part to a freeze in January and a frost in April that affected new growth and young clusters. In addition, rainfall totals for the 2008 season were below average for the second year in a row. Lower yields equated to superb concentration and richness in the wines. Weather patterns during the harvest period could not have been better. Warm, sunny days alternated with cooler, foggy days, promoting slow, even ripening of the grapes and allowing us to select the ideal time to pick. Pinot Noir from the Cargasacchi Vineyard was harvested on October 16.

WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS: Pinot Noir clusters from the Cargasacchi Vineyard were hand sorted before being de-stemmed and 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 10 months. About 43% of the barrels were new French oak.

This Pinot Noir is exceptionally focused and complex, as well as beautifully harmonized and well balanced. Concentrated aromas of dark cherry mingle with earth tones and a hint of minerality. Subtle French oak expression adds a touch of spice and a toasted almond component. The flavors offer layers of complexity, supported by a remarkably rich mid palate, soft tannins and a luscious black cherry flavor on the finish. The components will continue to intensify and develop, becoming even more complex with additional bottle age.

TECHNICAL DATA

T.A.: 6.1 g/l

pH: 3.61

Alcohol: 14.7%

Production: 137 cases