



**WINEMAKER:** Ken Brown

**VINEYARD SOURCES:** 50% *Clos Pepe Vineyard, Santa Rita Hills*; 32% *Garey Vineyard and 18% Nielson Vineyard, Santa Maria Valley*. This wine combines fruit from three of Santa Barbara County's top Pinot Noir vineyards. The highly regarded Clos Pepe Vineyard contributes intensely flavored grapes with a pure core of dark fruit expression. Planted on a plateau in western Santa Maria Valley, the Garey Vineyard produces Pinot Noirs of great complexity with spice and earth tones. Grapes from the Nielson Vineyard are known for rich concentration, fruit forward character and lush structure.

**VINTAGE:** 2008 was a standout vintage, especially for Pinot Noir. Fruit quality was exceptional across all our vineyard sources. 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.

**WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS:** Pinot Noir clusters for this wine 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 several times per day. The wine aged 11 months in French oak barrels with 32% new French oak.

This wine showcases the remarkable synergy between Pinot Noir grown in Santa Rita Hills and Santa Maria Valley. Lush fruit aromas of black cherry and blackberry are accented by a subtle hint of cinnamon stick and forest earth. On the palate, the wine features black cherry and dark plum flavors framed by velvety tannins. An exceptionally rich, dense structure envelops the wine's pleasing acidity, resulting in a plush, well balanced texture and bright, lingering finish.

#### **TECHNICAL DATA**

T.A.: 6.1 g/l  
pH: 3.64  
Alcohol: 14.3%  
Production: 196 cs.