



VINEYARD SOURCES: 68% Rio Vista, 32% Rancho La Viña. This Pinot Noir sources grapes from two outstanding Sta. Rita Hills vineyards. Rio Vista Vineyard is located at the eastern end of the appellation where slightly warmer temperatures result in a rich texture, smooth tannins and dark cherry flavors in the wine. Situated at the western edge of the Sta. Rita Hills appellation in close proximity to the Pacific Ocean, the new Rancho La Viña Vineyard enjoys cool, breezy conditions, which promotes deep color, intense fruit expression and complexity in the wine.

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. Grapes from Rio Vista were harvested on September 29 and October 7. Fruit from Rancho La Viña was harvested on October 15.

WINEMAKING: Pinot Noir clusters 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 16 months. About 36% of the barrels were new French oak.

TASTING NOTES: This wine is a classic expression of Santa Rita Hills Pinot Noir, blending fruit from the slightly warmer east end of the appellation with grapes from the cooler west end. Richly extracted aromas of dark cherry and black raspberry are accented by hints of cinnamon, nutmeg and subtle earth tones. On the palate, dark cherry flavors mingle with a touch of vanilla bean and new French oak. The texture is opulent and lush with round tannins and an elegant finish. The wine's richness allows for excellent drinkability upon release, while its structure ensures great cellar potential.

TECHNICAL DATA

T.A.: 6.4 g/l

pH: 3.64

Alcohol: 14.5%

Production: 359 cases