



**VINEYARD SOURCES:** *100% Nielson Vineyard, Santa Maria Valley, Santa Barbara County.* The original Nielson Vineyard was Santa Barbara County's first commercial vineyard planted in 1964 by pioneer, Uriel Nielson. The block sourced for this wine was replanted in 2000 under the direction of Ken Brown in collaboration with the Mondavi family who owned the property at the time. The vines are planted on a gentle slope in high density spacing to Dijon clone 115 on 101-14 rootstock. The cool microclimate and lean soils of the site promote small berries and rich concentration in the wines along with a beautiful fruit forward character and lush structure.

**VINTAGE:** Mother Nature set the stage for a challenging vintage in 2011 with a hard freeze in January and frost in April, causing damage to the buds and green tissue in certain vineyards. Spring and summer brought below average temperatures, which resulted in a long, cool growing season. This, combined with lower crop yields, fostered excellent development of depth and complexity in the fruit. A light rain event in early October was followed by warm, sunny days that gave the grapes the push they needed to reach full maturity. Grapes from the Nielson Vineyard were harvested on September 20, 2011.

**WINEMAKING:** 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 10 months in French oak barrels with 29% new French oak and was bottled in August 2012.

**TASTING NOTES:** This wine is a true reflection of the ideal soil and climate found at the Nielson Vineyard. Bright, pretty aromas of deep red cherry are accented by a background of subtle earth tones and a hint of spice. The elegant aromatics give way to vibrant Pinot Noir fruit flavors with nuances of cherry and French oak. The wine's soft tannins and rich, velvety structure are beautifully balanced by a lively thread of natural acidity—assurance that this Pinot Noir will age gracefully and continue to gain complexity and richness for years to come.

#### TECHNICAL DATA

T.A.: 5.3 g/l

pH: 3.66

Alcohol: 14.1%

Production: 231 cases