



**VINEYARD SOURCES:** 50% *La Rinconada Vineyard*, 32% *Rita's Crown Vineyard*, 18% *Rio Vista Vineyard*. This wine combines fruit from three outstanding Sta. Rita Hills properties. Planted in 1996, La Rinconada is situated in the heart of the appellation just west of the historic Sanford and Benedict Vineyard, and includes Dijon clones 667, 777 and 115. Located north of La Rinconada, Rita's Crown is one of the newest vineyards in Sta. Rita Hills, planted in 2007 to clones 667, 777 and 828 on a dramatic hillside. At the easterly end of Sta. Rita Hills, Rio Vista was planted in 2000 and has proven to be one of the best and most consistent Pinot Noir vineyards in the appellation. Clones include 115 and the Calera selection.

**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 Rita's Crown were harvested on September 29, while La Rinconada Pinot Noir was picked on October 1, and Rio Vista fruit on October 13.

**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 11 months in French oak barrels with 34% new French oak and was bottled on September 5, 2012.

**TASTING NOTES:** This wine is silky and harmonious with a dark ruby color and graceful tannins. Pretty aromas of bright cherry and blackberry are accented by a light toastiness from French oak and a touch of freshly grated nutmeg. The elegant aromatics give way to classic Pinot Noir fruit flavors of cherry and blackberry enveloped in a silky, seamless texture. While the fruit forward characteristics of this wine make it enjoyable upon release, extended cellar aging for six years or more will promote even more depth and complexity in both flavor and aromatics.

#### TECHNICAL DATA

T.A.: 5.1 g/l

pH: 3.61

Alcohol: 14.1%

Production: 327 cases