



**VINEYARD SOURCES:** *100% Nielson Vineyard, Santa Maria Valley, Santa Barbara County.* Ken's long tenure at Byron Winery in the Santa Maria Valley still endears him to the appellation, especially the Nielson Vineyard, site of Santa Barbara County's first commercial vineyard planted in 1964. 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 114. 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:** 2013 is hailed as a near perfect vintage across the state of California, described as "early, even and excellent." Harvest began about two weeks earlier than normal in Santa Barbara County and weather patterns were ideal—every week brought a warm up followed by a cool down in temperatures. This pattern allowed grapes to develop slowly and evenly, enabling winemakers to pick at the perfect ripeness. A lack of rain during the harvest season also contributed to grape quality. Yields were slightly above normal due to a greater number of clusters on each vine, but berry size remained small. Grapes from the Santa Maria Valley's Nielson Vineyard were harvested on September 20.

**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 30% new French oak and was bottled on September 4, 2014.

**TASTING NOTES:** Vividly aromatic and well balanced, this wine is a testament to the ideal Pinot Noir growing conditions found in the cool Santa Maria Valley. Bright aromas of deep red cherry and ripe berry are accented by hints of fresh earth and nutmeg. The fresh aromatics give way to vibrant Pinot Noir fruit flavors of ripe Ranier cherries with a touch of French oak and cherry cola. The wine's soft tannins and rich structure are beautifully balanced by the right touch of natural acidity. A richly textured mouthfeel leads to an elegant, pleasing finish.

#### TECHNICAL DATA

T.A.: 5.6 g/l

pH: 3.64

Alcohol: 14.1%

Production: 246 cases