



**VINEYARD SOURCES:** 66% *Rio Vista Vineyard, Sta. Rita Hills*; 34% *Nielson Vineyard, Santa Maria Valley*. This wine combines Pinot Noir from two of Santa Barbara County's preeminent appellations in one harmonious blend. Rio Vista Vineyard is located at the eastern end of Sta. Rita Hills where slightly warmer temperatures result in a rich texture, smooth tannins and dark cherry flavors in the wine. Nielson Vineyard is located in the heart of Santa Maria Valley where the cool microclimate and lean soils promote rich concentration in the wine along with a beautiful fruit forward character and lush structure.

**VINTAGE:** 2013 is being hailed as a near perfect vintage across the state of California, and has been 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 with ideal seed and skin maturity. 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, not larger berry size, which could compromise quality. Pinot Noir grapes for this wine were harvested in mid-September.

**WINEMAKING:** This Vin Gris was made using a centuries-old French technique known as a *saignée*, or juice draw, taken when the grapes are crushed. Customarily, these grapes are picked at a lower sugar level than traditional red Pinot Noir, resulting in naturally lower alcohol, brighter aromatics and flavor and higher acidity. Lightly colored from brief contact with the grape skins, the juice was transferred to neutral French oak barrels for fermentation and aging. The wine aged *sur lies* for five months, which added depth and complexity to the wine without overshadowing the fresh fruit components. The wine was bottled on March 19, 2014.

**TASTING NOTES:** Beautifully aromatic and crisp, this wine is exceptionally well balanced and food friendly. Fresh aromas of strawberry, cherry and red raspberry are accented by hints of honeysuckle, rhubarb and spice. Luscious red cherry and strawberry fruit flavors give way to a remarkable silky richness and complexity, attributable to the wine's barrel fermentation and *sur lies* aging. The rich texture carries through to the finish where it culminates with a touch of refreshing natural acidity.

#### TECHNICAL DATA

T.A.: 6.4 g/l

pH: 3.28

Alcohol: 13.5%

Production: 133 cases