



## 2015 RITA'S CROWN VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

Appellation	Sta. Rita Hills
T.A.	5.8 g/l
pH	3.59
Alcohol	14.4%
Production	336 cases

### VINEYARD

#### *100% Rita's Crown Vineyard*

Planted in 2007, Rita's Crown is one of the most highly regarded vineyards in the Sta. Rita Hills appellation. The estate is located at an elevation of 600 to 950 feet on a dramatic southwest-facing slope at the "crown" of the Santa Rita Hills, making it one of the highest planted vineyards in the AVA. Its elevation makes this site particularly exposed to coastal fog and cool marine breezes from the nearby Pacific Ocean, ideal for the production of outstanding Pinot Noir. The soils are sandy loam with ancient seashell deposits. The blocks used for this Pinot Noir are planted to Dijon clones 667, 777, 828 and 115 on 101-14 rootstock.

### VINTAGE

The 2015 vintage is a record vintage in many ways. It was the earliest harvest on record, eclipsing the previous 2014 record by up to two weeks for most varieties. A relatively mild winter led to an early start to the ripening cycle. Once buds began to push, mild spring weather allowed them to develop at an accelerated pace uninterrupted by spring frosts. Yields were also record low, especially in Pinot Noir, averaging 30-50% below historical averages. Near perfect ripening conditions coupled with small berry size resulted in superb quality fruit. Harvest dates were August 19 and August 24.

### 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 12 months in French oak barrels with 34% new French oak and was bottled on August 28, 2016.

### TASTING NOTES

This elegantly structured, beautifully concentrated wine leads with aromas of black cherry, blackberry and plum complemented by hints of herbes de provence and a subtle background of French oak. On the palate, rich berry and red cherry flavors are enhanced by cinnamon spice and mineral notes culminating in a graceful, opulent finish. The wine's authentic fruit expression, richness and balanced tannins assure graceful development and excellent cellar potential.