



VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

Appellation	Sta. Rita Hills
T.A.	5.7 g/l
pH	3.50
Alcohol	14.6%
Production	285 cases

VINEYARD

100% Sanford & Benedict Pinot Noir, Sta. Rita Hills

This vineyard is the birthplace of the Sta. Rita Hills appellation and played a significant role in bringing recognition to the great potential of the region. Planted by Richard Sanford and Michael Benedict in 1971, wines produced from this vineyard continue to set the highest quality standards. About half of this Pinot Noir hails from vines planted in 2008 to the highly regarded clone 943. The balance is from a nearby block of clone 2A planted in 2011. The soil type is the Botella Series, a composition of both clay and loam with a high calcareous content, which drains well and helps keep yields low.

VINTAGE

Unseasonably warm weather in February was moderated by cold nighttime temperatures, suppressing budbreak until early March, a bit later than the 2014 and 2015 vintages. While the limited winter rainfall was disappointing, the timing was advantageous. Most precipitation fell January through March, allowing flowering and set to occur without the threat of damage. The rest of the harvest season saw cooler temperatures alternate with short warmer spells, which helped winemakers target optimum ripening of the fruit. Crop yields were average and berry size was small to medium. Grapes from Sanford & Benedict Vineyard were harvested on August 23 and September 12.

WINEMAKING

Pinot Noir clusters for this wine were hand sorted before being de-stemmed and gravity fed to small open top fermenters. The must was immediately chilled for a pre-fermentation cold soak. During fermentation, concentration was enhanced by gently punching down the cap several times per day. The wine aged 19 months in French oak barrels with 42% new oak. The wine received a light fining to round out the tannins and was bottled on April 18, 2018.

TASTING NOTES

This wine is profoundly rich and complex with aromas of wild blackberry, violets and cherry cola accented by subtle notes of sandalwood, star anise and cured meat. The supple, opulent mouthfeel gives way to juicy flavors of boysenberry and black raspberry with hints of earth and burnt orange peel. The bright acidity and fine tannins are beautifully integrated to create an exceptionally balanced wine that will cellar gracefully for years to come.