



2017 RITA'S CROWN VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

Appellation	Sta. Rita Hills
T.A.	5.8 g/l
pH	3.57
Alcohol	14.2%
Production	242 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 and 828 on 101-14 rootstock.

VINTAGE

Abundant winter rainfall in 2017 helped ease a five-year drought in California, replenishing soils and leaching out any accumulated salts. Mild spring weather averted any frost issues, and set the stage for excellent bloom and set. A heat spike in early September sent grape sugars soaring toward ripeness and vintners hastened the pace to keep up. Cool temperatures quickly returned, and remained cool for the rest of the harvest season. Yields ranged from average to up to 50% below average. Rita's Crown Pinot Noir was harvested on September 4 and 5.

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 27% new French oak and was bottled on July 31, 2018.

TASTING NOTES

This beautifully structured, multi-dimensional Pinot Noir offers vibrant aromas of juicy plum, red cherry and boysenberry complemented by hints of shiitake mushroom and rhubarb. The texture is rich and round with dark plum and dried cherry flavors enhanced by a touch of wild game, cinnamon and dark chocolate on the finish. The wine's authentic fruit expression, gentle tannins and bright acidity profile assure graceful development and superb cellar potential.