



## 2016 RITA'S CROWN VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

Appellation	Sta. Rita Hills
T.A.	6.6 g/l
pH	3.46
Alcohol	14.4%
Production	259 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

The 2016 growing season began with unseasonably warm weather in February, moderated by cold nighttime temperatures, which suppressed budbreak until early March. 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. Grapes from Rita's Crown Vineyard were harvested on August 22.

### 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 11 months in French oak barrels with 34% new French oak and was bottled on August 28, 2017.

### TASTING NOTES

This exquisitely structured, multi-dimensional Pinot Noir offers vibrant aromas of black raspberry, dark cherry and pomegranate jam complemented by hints of bay leaf, orange peel and subtle minerality. The texture is rich and luxurious with plum and red cherry flavors enhanced by a touch of cherry cola and dark chocolate on the finish. The wine's authentic fruit expression, balanced tannins and bright acidity profile assure graceful development and superb cellar potential.