



2008 Cargasacchi Vineyard Pinot Noir Sta. Rita Hills – California

Wine notes: Dark, rich and full bodied this wine is perhaps the most aromatic Pinot Noir we have produced to date. Ripe berries, baking spice, earth and sage are all present in the nose, along with a plethora of other scents that lead your senses down numerous paths. The dark, saturated hue is suggestive of concentration, with the first sip revealing a luscious, richly textured wine that is balanced with ripe fruit, spice and tannin. The layers of small dark fruit are seamlessly woven with firm, ripe, tannins for a very persistent, mouthwatering finish.

Vintage: 2008 was the second year of drought with only 9 inches of rainfall in northwestern Santa Barbara County. The vines started and ended the season with depleted soil moisture. The canopies were small and the fruit carried by the vines was very light. In addition, frost damage in the spring forced us to drop a portion of crop that resulted from canes that emerged after the frost because of that fruit's delayed flavor development. In the face of adversity, the low yields with tiny cluster and berry size resulted in concentrated, richly flavored wine.

Viticulture: The wine is made with 100% Dijon clone 115, the most widely planted scion selection in Burgundy, France. (Origin, Morey St. Denis.) The 115 scion was grafted onto two rootstocks with distinctively different influences. The first, 3309 Couderc, is deep rooting but with poor tolerance for limestone tending to influence for darker, earthier and more tannic wine character. The other rootstock selection, 420a, is limestone tolerant but extremely low vigor due to the effect of a shallow rooting nature and tends to ripen earlier and to influence for fruitier wine character. As planted, both rootstocks devigorate and decrease cluster and berry size. Cargasacchi Vineyard soils are shallow, calcareous and extremely high in free lime. Trellis is VSP (vertical shoot position).

Winemaking: The fruit was hand harvested and destemmed but the whole berries were not crushed. Destemming was followed by a five days cold soak with dry ice prior to fermentation in 1-ton fermenters. Fermentation was allowed to begin with native yeast, and then inoculated with Assmanhausen yeast to assure complete fermentation. Raised in small 228 liter barrels consisting of tight-grained, French sessile oak, the wine completed malo-lactic fermentation and was racked once during élevage.

Vineyard & Appellation: The Cargasacchi Vineyard is at the western end of the Sta. Rita Hills appellation and exposed to severe maritime climate influence. The prevailing northwest onshore marine pattern sweeps inland off from the Pacific and across the broad Lompoc plain between the Santa Ynez Mountains and La Purisima range. The winds are channeled and accelerate through the narrow maritime throat of the Sta. Rita Hills.

In the Sta. Rita Hills, California's southernmost Pinot Noir growing region, the shorter, temperate summer days combine with the extreme marine influence that is further focused by topography, to produce the coolest mesoclimate and longest growing season for Pinot Noir in the world.