



2016 Estate Vineyard, Old Vine Pinot Noir

AVA: Ribbon Ridge

LOCATION: North Valley Rd.

ELEVATION: 450'

SOIL TYPE: Wellsdale

CLONAL MATERIAL: 100% Pommard

VINEYARD SIZE: 30-acre vineyard

VINIFICATION: From 0-50% whole cluster fermentations done in 1.75-ton open-top fermenters

PICKING DATE: Mid-September

TONS/ACRE: 1.5-2.0

OWNERS: Patricia Green Cellars

PRODUCTION: 851 cases bottled

Site Characteristics: There are no vineyards we work with that are as difficult to summarize in a neat package than our Estate Vineyard. There are 18 sections of Pinot Noir based on vine age and clone (as well a section of Sauvignon Blanc), elevation ranging from 250' to 475'. Pinot Noir plantings were done in ten different vintages ranging from as early as 1984 to as recent as 2010. The vineyard is mostly Pommard, but there is also 3 acres of Wadensvil, 3 acres of Dijon 114 and an acre of Dijon 777. Spacing varies from 5 x 6 to 5 x 8. Some blocks are inter-planted with every other row being of one age and every other a drastically different age. Two blocks are inter-planted with two rows of the same age followed by one row of a different age. To add an even greater level of confusion, the vast majority of the site (the 25 acres at the higher elevation) is planted directly on top of the hill with a 360-degree aspect to the vineyard. Then there is the geology of the site, which is made up of an extremely sandy Marine Sedimentary soil that sits atop a large bed of sandstone sub-soil with a water table that is very deep and highly mineralized. This is a unique site to say the least.

Relatively early on we began to conclude that there were different natures not only to the separate blocks in the estate vineyard, but a distinct stylistic difference between the two sets of plantings (vines planted between 1984-1997 and the vines planted between 1998-2001 along with the new 2010 planting). Since we dry farm our estate vines to encourage the downward growth of roots, the older plants and the younger plants are at different root depth levels in the sub-soil, and consequently have access to different levels and types of water, nutrients and minerals. The root system is what feeds the plants and ultimately the fruit on the vine. In this soft Marine soil root depth translates to different flavors and texture profiles in the grapes. The Estate bottling consists of 13 separate sections of the vineyard that were planted in the 1997-2001 (and 2010) window. The Estate Old Vine bottling can come from the remaining 5 blocks although sometimes 1 or 2 of those blocks are bottled separately.

Winemaking and Notes: As the Estate vines tap their roots deep into the soft sub-soil they eventually make contact with the mineralized water on the property. This brings a whole new element to the flavor and texture profile of the wine. This bottling comes from the original 1984 planting of Pommard which was fermented with 33% whole clusters, a 1987 planting of Chardonnay grafted to Pommard Clone in 1998, a 1990 planting of Pinot Gris that was grafted to Pommard in 2002, and a 1997 planting of Pommard on a steep west facing slope. Given the diversity within the vineyard (we have a 360-degree aspect on our hillside vineyard) and the range of vine age (20-33 years) we were able to pick at different times and had fermentations that ranged from 100% de-stemmed to 50% whole cluster. The assemblage for this particular wine is always fascinating because you can see the wine come together as the elements from each block are added in. This wine is one of the few truly older vine bottlings that exists from Ribbon Ridge. Older vineyards here, have the capacity to translate the mineral laden nature of our water and soil into the refined, focused nature of the fruit. This AVA is a special place and as interesting, dramatic and amazing as some of our specialty bottlings from this site are, this one is the mother of them all. The 2015 was listed as the #39 wine in The Wine Enthusiast 2017 Top 100 wines.