

2016 Pinot Noir

Los Carneros



The 2016 Vintage

Bud break arrived early this year, beginning around Valentine's Day, and it was a cool and foggy season through August. We had no excessive heat in July, August or September, which provided for a longer hang time for the grapes. The grapes ripened uniformly and calmly at their own pace, yields were a tad higher, and the flavors are phenomenal.

Varietal Composition	100% Pinot Noir
Appellation	Los Carneros
Harvest	September 2016
Technical Data	ALC: 14.5% by vol.; TA: 5.5 g/L; pH: 3.67
Cooperage	10 Months in French Oak Barrels (20% New)
Production	8,500 Cases

About The Vineyard

Carneros is renowned for its cool climate because of its proximity to San Pablo Bay. Almost all of the sourcing for this vintage (90%) is fruit from our own estate vineyard. Artesa sits high on a hilltop with panoramic views of Napa Valley and is surrounded by 150 acres of estate vineyards that are comprised of a complex series of small, ultra-premium blocks where varieties are matched with soil types, topography and sun exposure. The diverse terrain features hillside slopes that taper off as sea level approaches. Most vineyard blocks are planted at altitudes between 200 to 400 feet in soils that range from shallow clay to thin, gravelly loam. Vines struggle for water and nutrients; crop sizes are small, yielding limited quantities of highly concentrated fruit. We combined this fruit with a small portion of grapes from two select foothill vineyards in the Carneros region, working closely with growers we've known for many years; blending grapes from these sites yields a multifaceted wine with distinct layers of flavor.

Winemaking

The grapes were hand-harvested throughout the month of September in 2016, as each block achieved ripeness and flavor development. Winemaker Ana Diogo-Draper de-stemmed, but did not crush the grapes, placing them in temperature controlled, open top stainless steel tanks. The fermentation tanks were chilled for a four-day "cold soak" - designed to extract color and flavor from the grape must. The tanks were gradually warmed so that fermentation could begin. About 50% of the lot was fermented by native yeasts and 50% by inoculating the grapes with commercial yeast. By using both types of fermentation yeasts we intended to produce components with distinct layers of fruit intensity, texture and structure. Pinot Noir grapes require a gentle handling and therefore we performed three punchdowns a day, on each vineyard lot, in order to gently extract fruit and color. Tasting each tank daily, the team pressed the wine off its skins when the proper flavor and tannin structure was achieved. The wine was placed in French oak barrels (20% new) for ten months prior to bottling, ageing on lees, to obtain a final blend with added layers of complexity.

Tasting Notes

On the nose, this wine offers beautiful, bright aromas of cherry, plum and a hint of rose petal. On the palate, lush flavors of strawberry, mulberry and blueberry are accentuated with hints of spice and earth. The natural acidity gives vibrancy and it is an excellent partner to so many foods. The wine is medium bodied and has a long finish. A classic Pinot Noir that is true to its unique appellation.