



## RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY PINOT NOIR VINTAGE 2015 • RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY

### OBSERVATIONS ON A NEW VINTAGE

The 2015 growing season was again incredibly dry and a continuation of the California drought for a record fourth year. Using deficit irrigation concepts and careful soil and plant moisture data, we came through the season without water shortages. The spring and summer brought classic California weather without any extremes and we paced about two weeks earlier than our average during the growing season.

Early Pinot Noir fruit started arriving from our Vine Hill Ranch just as the fog and cool conditions returned to the valley; resulting in a rather lengthy three week pick. Then, just after Labor Day, a spell of hot weather returned. As a result, fruit from Owsley vineyard was ready and harvested in just one week right after the early September warm-up. The last of our harvested fruit finally arrived at the winery on September 24th. The delay in ripening allowed for additional hang time on the vine and the fruit to develop beautiful flavors with bright natural acidity.

### OUR OWSLEY ESTATE VINEYARD

Our Owsley and Vine Hill vineyards in the Russian River Valley provided all the Pinot Noir for this vintage. The Owsley ranch, with its dramatic temperature changes from warm days to cool, foggy nights, creates concentrated and complex flavors in the grapes. Vine Hill vineyard, with its more than 400-foot elevation change, allows each ridge, slope, and valley in the vineyard to contribute unique characteristics to the grapes. Combined with a variety of soils and clones, high-density spacing and rootstocks that limit excessive vine growth, the vineyards provide a beautiful variety of elegant fruit. It is from this fruit that we craft our Sonoma-Cutrer Russian River Valley Pinot Noir.

### ON THE WINE

Grapes are picked by hand early each morning into small bins and hand-sorted before a gentle destemming. During the four-day cold soak and the eight- to twelve-day fermentation, the wine is punched down by hand in small, open-top fermenters. On completion of fermentation the wine is gently pressed using a basket press and gravity racked into the barrels. We age our Pinot Noir in a regimen of one-third each of new, once-used and twice-used French oak. After resting for 10 months, the final blend is assembled and prepared for bottling. It is then allowed to evolve for an additional six months in the bottle.

As this wine is poured into your glass, you will notice its beautiful, dark ruby red color. This is a classic Russian River Pinot Noir that expresses aromas and flavors of dark fruit. The first impression starts in the nose with intense blackberry fruit aromas, cola and cassis jam followed by a touch of vanilla and tobacco accented with hints of baking spice and red licorice. The wine is richly textured and balanced with a beautiful brightness. Flavors of black cherry, tobacco and sweet barrel spice shine throughout. Fine tannins round out the long, smooth finish.

Alcohol 14.2% • TA: 6.08 gms/L • pH: 3.6 • RS: 0.7 gms/L (dry)  
100% Pinot Noir • 100% Tank Fermented  
Oak aged 10 months: 33% new, 33% once-used, 33% twice-used  
Vineyards This Vintage: Vine Hill (57%), Owsley (43%)



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