



FOUNDERS RESERVE PINOT NOIR

VINTAGE 2018 • RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY • ESTATE BOTTLED

OBSERVATIONS ON A NEW VINTAGE

Every new harvest brings its own set of unique challenges. In 2018, late spring rains kicked-off the growing season with a great start. As we moved into the summer months, the temperatures warmed up giving our fruit a chance to develop nicely. August and early September brought a wild swing to the weather with very cool temperatures and foggy conditions. Our harvest started almost two weeks later than normal with the first fruit finally arriving from our Vine Hill Ranch on September 2nd. After the slow start, the pace picked up and we completed harvest quickly with the last of the fruit from our Owsley Vineyard arriving four and a half weeks later. Once again, the Russian River Valley lived up to its reputation as one of the best places in the world to grow Pinot Noir giving us elegant flavor and bright, natural acidity.

OUR VINEYARDS

In the heart of Russian River Valley lies our Vine Hill Ranch and to the southwest lies Owsley Vineyard, both of which provided us the fruit for this year's vintage of Founders Reserve Pinot Noir. Vine Hill Ranch, with nearly 300-ft. elevation changes, allows each ridge, slope and valley in the vineyard to contribute unique characteristics to the grapes. Owsley Ranch is known for its dramatic temperature changes from warm days to cool, foggy nights. The constant fluctuating temperatures create concentrated and complex flavors in the grapes.

ON THE WINE

At Sonoma-Cutrer, we value quality above all and handle our fruit with the upmost care. Grapes are picked by hand, early each morning, into small bins and hand-sorted at our Pinot Barn winery before a gentle destemming. Grapes then go through a four-day cold soak and an eight-to-twelve-day fermentation with the wine being punched down by hand in small, open-top fermenters. When fermentation is complete, the wine is carefully pressed using a basket press and gravity racked into barrels. For this vintage, the wine rested in barrel for fourteen months before the final blend was assembled and prepared for bottling on Nov. 18, 2019.

Each year our winemakers choose their favorite barrels from that harvest to craft our Founders Reserve wines. Sonoma-Cutrer Pinots are known for being profoundly complex and this wine showcases the "best of the best" of our estate-grown fruit from our Owsley and Vine Hill Ranch vineyards. This is an intense vintage with a beautiful deep garnet hue when poured into the glass. On the nose, you will find rich dark characters of black cherry, black raspberry, dark chocolate and caramelized sugar with hints of earthy forest floor and black tea. Full-bodied, the wine is richly textured with powerful flavors of juicy black berry fruits, dark chocolate and all spice. This bold Pinot Noir is not for the faint of heart!

Our Founders Pinots are perfect for cellar aging. Allowing this vintage to bottle age another 2-4 years will strengthen the complexity in the wine while softening the tannins.



Alcohol: 14.3% • **TA:** 5.8 gms/L • **pH:** 3.5 RS g/l: (dry)
100% Pinot Noir • 100% Malolactic
Vineyard Designation: 64% Owsley Vineyard,
36% Vine Hill Ranch • **Fermentation:** 100% Tank
Oak Aged: 14 months - 33% new, 33% 1yr, 33%
2yr old oak

Please enjoy our wines responsibly.

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