

# 2014 Pinot Noir Russian River Valley



**100% Pinot Noir, 60% clone 667, 40% clone 777**

*A pitch-perfect Pinot, honoring the subtlety of the varietal*

*By Robert Rex, winemaker*

**The Vintage:** 2014 was the third good vintage in a row. It also reflected the new normal in the California North Coast, that is, a short winter, an early spring and a cool summer with an early harvest. Climate change is shifting the growing season to earlier in the year. We saw little evidence of the drought in the vines but expect the lack of good root growth from subnormal rainfall will ultimately affect crop size. Crop size in 2014 was normal. Quality was very high

**The Appellation and the Vineyards:** The Russian River Valley AVA (American Viticultural Area) is one of the most highly regarded AVAs in the world for growing Pinot Noir, and is my favorite AVA in Sonoma for Pinot. It is the Pacific influence and the geography that makes the difference. The Pacific is cold, the interior of California is hot. The difference creates a marine layer of clouds, fog in the early morning, overcast later. Hills and mountains running parallel to the coast moderate this marine influence as you move inland. The River valley creates a gap that allows the marine influence to come further inland and stay longer before being burned off by the sun. This creates cold mornings and temperate afternoons in the Russian River (RRV) AVA. This is perfect for the thin skinned Pinot Noir. Here they ripen slower and avoid getting burned by the sun.

The two vineyards from whence this wine comes, a stones throw from each other, are in the center of the RRV AVA, where we get sun earlier than on the coast, giving the wine a bit more fullness than Coastal AVA Pinot Noir.

**The Winemaking:** The two clones were fermented separately, started on native yeast and then inoculated with pure strain. The last of the fermentation took place in the barrel. After Malo-lactic was completed in February the wine was stirred, sir-lees, for three to four months, monitored and timed by taste. Barrels used were 100% French oak, 20% new.

**The Experience:** The color is light and delicately transparent typical of the best Pinot Noir. A flowery, complex and varietally correct nose promises a true Pinot experience. Layered flavors expand in the mid palate in perfect balance, rolling backwards and expanding outwards, evolving into a lingering finish. As with the greatest Pinots, this one is feminine and delicate and pairs with a wider variety of foods than any other wine.

60% Clone 667 from Hogan's Run Vineyard. 40% Clone 777 from Vineyard 11

Picked: September 5, 2014, 25.1 & 25.3 Brix, 3.45 & 3.79pH, 7.6 & 8.1g/L T.A.

Yeast: Wild, RC 212

Fined: Bentonite to settle lees and heat stabilize. Cold stabilized by temperature drop.

Cross flow clarified before bottling, sterile bottled, no Velcorin

SO<sub>2</sub> at bottling 25 ppm, at release <12 ppm

Bottled 260 cases, May 26, 2016

Alcohol 13.8%, Residual sugar 1g/L (classified as dry), Vegan

**More information:**

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