

DONUM

The Gift of the Land

Our Russian River Valley Pinot Noir comes from the Nugent vineyard, planted in 1997 by Anne Moller-Racke and Joe Nugent. The natural variations in soil across the vineyard, along with the blend of Dijon and heritage clones, results in a complex wine, with richness from the 667 and elegance and finesse from the Pommard and Calera clones. Fog from the Pacific generally recedes fairly early in the day resulting in plenty of sun, but prevailing winds from the west keep this site cooler in the afternoon, allowing for extended hang time. Starting in 2012 we began to include some fruit from the Pommard block in the estate blend.

The 2016 Russian River Estate is a striking ruby/garnet color, with lifted aromas of blackberry, blueberry, cranberry preserves and kirsch, with accompanying notes of toasted pinenut, dried leaves and an exotic clove note. Luscious and fresh on the palate with juicy berry and black fruit and firm but subtle tannin. Big yet still bright, the finish has herbal notes joining the lingering dark fruit.

FRUIT: 50% Dijon 667, 30% Pommard, 10% Calera & 10% Donum clone from the Winside Estate Vineyard

NEW OAK: 50% new French oak (Remond, Atelier, Francois Freres)

HARVEST DATE: September 3 – 6, 2016

ALCOHOL: 14.8%

BOTTLING DATE: January 31, 2018

PH: 3.64

CASE PRODUCTION: 827 cases

TA: 6.6 g/L

FERMENTATION & AGING DETAILS

In 2016 our Russian River vineyard was picked during a short window in early September. Five different picks were made from four blocks, each planted to a different clone, with each pick fermented separately in stainless steel tank. Each lot is treated slightly differently based upon fruit maturity, fermentation kinetics, and the flavor profile of the wine, but in general the must remains on the skins for about three weeks and undergoes several punchdowns of the cap per day during the peak of fermentation. Pumpovers are used occasionally to introduce oxygen to the must. Upon the completion of fermentation, the wine is transferred to a mix of new and used French oak 60-gallon barrels where it undergoes malolactic fermentation. The wine ages on its lees for another year, before the final blend is selected, blended, and bottled early the second year after harvest.

WEATHER ATTRIBUTES

The 2016 vintage was eerily reminiscent of 2014 and 2015; in fact, looking at a graph of growing degree days, 2016 is almost an exact replica of 2014. Thus, it was no surprise that bud-break was early for the third successive vintage, in some cases starting in early February, but certainly well underway by mid-March. This naturally results in an earlier harvest, and we once again began picking Pinot Noir in August and finished by the first week of October. However, looking merely at temperatures can be deceiving, as factors such as rainfall, diurnal temperature swings, and the timing and duration of heat spikes can greatly affect the development of the vines. While 2016 was the last of five straight drought years, we did receive average or slightly above average rain during the winter of 2015/16, so the soils were saturated, and water was not an issue, allowing for even vegetative growth.

The 2016 season was characterized by three heat waves in September, which makes for tricky picking decisions, as fruit that is just on the cusp of ripeness can quickly jump to over-ripeness during prolonged heat. We were fortunate that the timing of the heat was not problematic for our vineyards, and we picked ripe fruit just before each heatwave, leading to a harvest with three peaks of harvesting. The 2016 vintage was the fifth in a row with excellent growing conditions, a remarkable string of good fortune.

2016
RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY
ESTATE GROWN
PINOT NOIR

