

DONUM

The Gift of the Land

West Slope comes from the middle portion of our west-sloping 4-90 vineyard block, a 5.5-acre site at the Donum Ranch. The Donum Selection has always been the mainstay clone of our Donum Carneros Pinot Noir. Beginning in 2007, as the vines developed further depth and complexity with age, this block seemed to cry out to be bottled as a stand-alone, and the West Slope bottling was born. The West Slope truly represents the culmination of our search for the top Pinot Noir terroirs in Carneros.

The 2015 West Slope shows a classic dark fruit profile on the nose, with notes of toasty oak at this young stage. On the palate layers and layers of juicy cherry, raspberry, and blackberry are joined by a toasty, almost baked-apple flavor to create a remarkably intense, palate-coating experience. Even with all this richness and intensity, the wine remains incredibly lively, with new flavors continuing to emerge even as the finish lingers on the palate. -Dan Fishman, winemaker

FRUIT: 100% Donum Clone, single vineyard block

NEW OAK: 90% new French oak (Francois Frères, Cadus, Atelier, Gamba, CaVin)

HARVEST DATE: September 15, 2015

ALCOHOL: 14.3%

BOTTLING DATE: January 23, 2017

PH: 3.64

CASES PRODUCED: 299 cases

TA: 6.4 g/L

FERMENTATION & AGING DETAILS

The West Slope was harvested in one pass in 2015, on September 15, and quickly transferred to the winery for harvesting and de-stemming. The must then cold-soaked for 8 days, before undergoing a primary fermentation lasting about 14 days. During fermentation the cap was punched down three times per day, with occasional pumpovers. Upon completion of fermentation the wine was racked to barrel to undergo malolactic fermentation and then age on the lees. After a year in barrel we tasted through and selected on the best barrels for the final West Slope blend, which was assembled and bottled in January, 2017.

WEATHER ATTRIBUTES

By 2015 California was well into its five-year drought, and we saw essentially no rain during the summer and fall. Following the trend of 2014, budbreak was very early, and the season was well underway by mid-March. Growers were fortunate with similar conditions in 2014, but in 2015 our luck ran out and the early flowering in April coincided with some very unsettled weather. Seesawing temperatures, high winds, and abrupt changes from foggy and cloudy to sunny and calm were frequent for nearly six weeks. These wild swings led to shatter as flowering was interrupted, and some vineyards saw crops reduced by as much as 75%. At Donum we were relatively fortunate, averaging only about 20% loss across all blocks. This weather gave way to a fairly mild and even summer until August, when heat returned and we saw several spikes in which temperatures approached triple digits. This can lead to some difficult picking decisions, as it is always risky to leave crop that is almost ripe hanging through such extreme heat. Once again we were perhaps more fortunate than some of our colleagues, and our ripening schedule lined-up such that we were able to harvest some blocks just before each heat spike, while the rest were able to hang through the heat. Overall the quality was very high in 2015, and the wines have plenty of structure indicating they should age well.

2015
CARNEROS
WEST SLOPE
PINOT NOIR

