

Au Bon Climat



2020

Pinot Noir, “Larmes de Grappe”

Our Larmes de Grappe (tears of the grape) wines are something special. The grapes need to be perfectly ripe and the stems lignified. Lignification is the complex process where the stems stop producing chlorophyll and become woody and brown. It does not happen every year. Including these lignified stems in the fermentation gives the wine more complexity and spice. We use our best grapes with our best barrels to make a few cases of this Pinot Noir. This year the grapes are from Block 11 from the prestigious Bien Nacido Vineyard. We wait to pick until the stems have lignified and then ferment whole cluster without any destemming.

AT A GLANCE

APPELLATION:
Santa Maria Valley

VINEYARD:
Bien Nacido

VARIETAL:
100% Pinot Noir

COOPERAGE:
28 months 100% new François Frères French oak 350L barrels

HARVEST: September 4, 2020

ALCOHOL: 13.5%

ACIDITY: 6.0 g/L

pH: 3.77

RESIDUAL SUGAR: <0

SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$100

Tasting Notes

This is a beautifully structured, complex yet seamless Pinot. Powerful aromas of red cherry, rose blossom, and anise are joined by notes of barrel spice on the palate. There is richness without being heavy. It is supple and racy in the glass, with terrific depth and balance.

Food Pairings

Pair with thick, oak-grilled pork chops with a rosemary rub, lamb with red wine reduction sauce, or cioppino with freshly grated Parmesan cheese.

From The Winemaker

Usually from Sanford and Benedict Vineyard, for the 2020 vintage the fruit came from Bien Nacido Vineyard's Block 11, planted to clone 667 about 30 years ago. Grape growing and winemaking followed 'Larmes' protocol. Perfectly ripe grapes with lignified stems were 100% whole cluster fermented with punch downs twice a day by hand. The gentle extraction of hand punch downs yields rich, ripe tannins, which balance nicely with the fruit and oak. After pressing and short settling of only the heavy lees, the wine was aged for 28 months in 100% new François Frères French oak 350-liter barrels. We fined lightly using egg whites to remove some of the excessive tannin. We bottled without filtration. The resulting wine is incredibly dense, rich and opaque with deep berry, dark chocolate flavors that linger forever.

Au Bon Climat & Clendenen Family Vineyards

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