

Au Bon Climat



2021

Pinot Noir Sanford & Benedict Vineyard

The first “great” vineyard in Santa Barbara County and one of the great Pinot Noir vineyards of America, was planted by Richard Sanford and Michael Benedict in 1971 in the cool Sta. Rita Hills AVA. The Burgundian varieties had found a home in Santa Barbara County. Au Bon Climat purchased a few tons of grapes from Michael Benedict in the mid 1980s, and since then we have received grapes from this vineyard every year; a relationship of over 4 decades. Only Sanford Winery has that kind of “history” with this vineyard. The iconic, sustainably farmed vineyard was instrumental in elevating awareness that Santa Barbara County creates world-class Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Consequently, Sanford & Benedict Vineyard earned a position in Au Bon Climat’s Santa Barbara Historic Vineyards Collection series.

AT A GLANCE

APPELLATION:
Santa Ynez Valley

HARVEST: September 22, 2021

VINEYARD:
Sanford & Benedict Vineyard

ALCOHOL: 13.5%

ACIDITY: 5.5 g/L

VARIETAL:
100% Pinot Noir

pH: 3.64

RESIDUAL SUGAR: <0

COOPERAGE:
20 months, 50% new François
Frères French oak barrels

SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$50

Tasting Notes

A reticent Pinot Noir that, with aeration, reveals a nose of perfumed red and black cherries, dried cranberries, star anise and cedar. The palate is silky, nuanced, with spice-laced flavor layers energized by lip-smacking acidity. Lovely now, this will only grow more profound with some cellar time.

Food Pairings

Pair this complex, layered Pinot with roast turkey, Peking duck, oak grilled pork chops, or a lamb roast.

From The Winemaker

The vineyard has a mantle of hard, siliceous chert-gravel covering deep, well-drained soils. When combined with the cool climate (Region 1) provided by nearby the Pacific Ocean, it is a perfect medium for quality Pinot and Chardonnay. We select grapes from one of the “old vine, own rooted” sections at Sanford and Benedict. After careful hand picking in the early morning hours, the grapes arrive at the winery nice and cold. Cold grapes give time for a cold soak and a slower fermentation. During the extended process, the fruit driven aromas and flavors are thoroughly extracted from the grapes. The slower fermentation also assisted in the gradual extraction of additional aromas and flavors as the alcohol content slowly rises. About 50% was whole cluster fermented. After the grapes reached dryness, the grapes were pressed, and the wine was put in François Frères French oak barrels, 50% new. The wine was gently raked in the late spring and was returned to barrel for a total of 20 months. No fining or filtration was necessary.

Au Bon Climat & Clendenen Family Vineyards

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