

Au Bon Climat



2023

Pinot Noir, “La Bauge Au-dessus”

La Bauge Au-dessus translates as a “wild party upstairs”. Our original bottlings were from the hillsides of Bien Nacido Vineyard and we have returned to form, with the addition of another Santa Maria plot, Solomon Hills Vineyard. The wine intends to create a classic Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir with great aromatics and Old World character. It has a more integrated structure and suppleness early on, making it enjoyable now, though it will continue to age handsomely. The key word is balance. A balance of oak and fruit, a balance of tannin and acid, and a balance of elegance and intensity. This supple, delicious Pinot Noir does not compete with food but maximizes the dining experience by complimenting whatever it is paired with.

AT A GLANCE

APPELLATION:

Santa Maria Valley

VINEYARD:

Bien Nacido, Solomon Hills

VARIETAL:

100% Pinot Noir

COOPERAGE:

18 months, 20% new François Frères French oak barrels

HARVEST:

September & October 2023
(multiple pickings)

ALCOHOL: 13.5%

ACIDITY: 5.8 g/L

pH: 3.63

RESIDUAL SUGAR: <0

SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$35

Tasting Notes

This wine captures the essence of Santa Maria Valley fruit with vibrant red berry, black tea, sarsaparilla root, and ginger aromas. As it opens, earthier notes of portobello mushroom and leather emerge, adding depth and complexity. Bright blood orange and rosewood accents balance the chalky tannins and soft oak, while lively acidity provides structure and an elegant mouthfeel. A complex wine now with age-ability.

Food Pairings

Our “La-Bauge” is a versatile wine that can be paired with light snacks and charcuterie or hearty meals. For a leaner dish try balsamic roasted beets or a strawberry walnut salad. For dishes of substance try any wild game, truffled potatoes, or roast pork chops.

From The Winemaker

The fruit is from the highly regarded Bien Nacido Vineyard, as well as another key vineyard of the Santa Maria AVA, Solomon Hills Vineyard. The cool, steady growing season of 2023 led to slow, consistent ripening, with harvest occurring 3–4 weeks later than average. This extended hang time allowed for excellent retention of structure and depth. Our wines achieved healthy yields without compromising intensity. As with all our Pinot Noirs, we are “hands-on”. Every Pinot Noir is fermented in 5-ton open-top fermenters, which are punched twice a day. These punch downs breakup the cap of skins that rises to the surface back into the juice so the fermentation process extracts the best part of the Pinot grapes. The wine is pressed and goes to barrel with moderate lees. Our “La Bauge” Pinot Noir is aged in 20% new François Frères French oak barrels. The wine was carefully racked in the spring and then aged once again for 18 months total. It was lightly fined with egg whites, settled, and then bottled unfiltered.

Au Bon Climat & Clendenen Family Vineyards

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