Au Bon Climat



2023

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

VINEYARD: Sanford & Benedict Vineyard

VARIETAL: 100% Pinot Noir

COOPERAGE: 18 months, 100% new François Frères French oak barrels

HARVEST: September 25, 2023

ALCOHOL: 13.5%

ACIDITY: 5.6 g/L

pH: 3.68

RESIDUAL SUGAR: <0

SUGGESTED RETAIL: $50

Tasting Notes

Delicate aromas of vanilla, lilac, marzipan, and fresh red cherry are lifted by a touch of long pepper spice. The palate primarily shows raspberry and cherry cobbler, finishing with tomato leaf and the hallmark Sanford & Benedict character—soft, fruit-driven texture with rigorous tannins.

Food Pairings

Compliment this red wine with rustic dishes like oak grilled pork chops, truffle pasta, and just about any lean meats and game; especially wild boar ragu.

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. After the grapes reached dryness, the grapes were pressed, and the wine was put in François Frères French oak barrels, 100% new. The wine was gently racked in the late spring and was returned to barrel for a total of 18 months. No fining or filtration was necessary.

Au Bon Climat & Clendenen Family Vineyards
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