

DRAGONETTE CELLARS



2011 PINOT NOIR, AMPELOS VINEYARD, STA. RITA HILLS



100% PINOT NOIR

VINEYARD

AMPELOS - 100%

CLONES

115 & POMMARD

YIELD (TONS PER ACRE)

115 - 1.61

POMMARD - 1.96

HARVEST DATE

OCTOBER 11

APPELLATION

STA. RITA HILLS

FERMENTATION

1.5 TON OPEN TOP FERMENTERS

4 DAY COLD SOAK

NATIVE AND COMMERCIAL YEASTS

COOPERAGE

100% FRENCH OAK, 30% NEW

AGING

11 MONTHS ON THE LEES

BOTTLED

AUGUST 17, 2012

ALCOHOL: 14.3%

CASES PRODUCED: 80

SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$54

PHILOSOPHY:

THE DELICATE AND EXPRESSIVE PINOT NOIR REQUIRES METICULOUS WORK IN THE VINEYARD AND CELLAR IN ORDER TO REACH ITS POTENTIAL. TO THAT END, WE ARE PERSONALLY INVOLVED THROUGHOUT THE GROWING SEASON IN CANOPY MANAGEMENT, IRRIGATION AND YIELD CONTROL. WE CHOOSE HARVEST DATES BY FLAVOR, TASTING FOR SUGAR, ACID AND PHENOLIC RIPENESS. ONCE THE GRAPES ARE IN, THEY NEED TO BE GENTLY HANDLED, RARELY MOVED AND BARRELS CONSTANTLY TOPPED. THE EXTRA LABOR IS REWARDED IN WINES OF TEXTURAL PURITY, DEPTH AND COMPLEXITY.

THE VINEYARD

AMPELOS VINEYARD IS CAREFULLY MANAGED USING ORGANIC, BIODYNAMIC AND SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES. LOCATED ON THE NORTH AND WEST SLOPING HILLSIDES AT THE EASTERN END OF THE COOL STA. RITA HILLS APPELLATION. AMPELOS GETS EARLY MORNING COOLING BREEZES AND FOG FROM BOTH ITS PROXIMITY TO THE SANTA ROSA CORRIDOR AND THE HWY 246 CORRIDOR.

THE VINTAGE

ALTHOUGH 2011 WAS A SECOND STRAIGHT CHALLENGING VINTAGE IN SANTA BARBARA COUNTY, THROUGH CAREFUL CANOPY AND CROP MANAGEMENT AND PATIENCE AND SELECTIVE PICKING AT HARVEST, WE WERE ABLE TO MAKE SUCCESSFUL WINES. THE SEASON COMMENCED WITH A DEVASTATING APRIL FROST WHICH CUT YIELDS. NEXT, THE WEATHER WAS COLD AND RAINY DURING BLOOM, RESULTING IN A HIGHLY VARIABLE SET, FURTHER CURTAILING YIELDS. THE SEASON ITSELF WAS HISTORICALLY COOL, AND UNLIKE 2010, THERE WERE NO HEAT SPIKES TO RAPIDLY INCREASE RIPENESS LEVELS. THE SMALLER CROP LOADS WERE CRITICAL IN 2011, AS THE COOL TEMPERATURES OF THE SEASON WOULD HAVE MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO RIPEN A LARGE CROP LOAD. PATIENCE WAS REQUIRED AT HARVEST AS THE GRAPES RIPENED SLOWLY; HOWEVER FAIR WEATHER AND SUNSHINE IN LATE SEPTEMBER AND EARLY OCTOBER HELPED PUSH THE FRUIT TO SOLID RIPENESS AT LOWER BRIX LEVELS. ULTIMATELY, WE WERE PLEASED WITH WINES, WHICH SHOW SOLID, VARIETAL FLAVORS AND MINERALITY IN A MEDIUM BODIED FRAME, WITH ROUND AND RIPE TANNINS AND ACIDS.

OUR WINEMAKING

WE SCHEDULE ALL PICKS FOR EARLY MORNING (OR NIGHT) HARVEST, AND WE PERSONALLY HAND SORT CLUSTERS IN THE FIELD. AMPELOS EMPLOYS A UNIQUELY EFFECTIVE FIELD SORTING TABLE, WHICH HELPS ENSURE ONLY THE HIGHEST QUALITY FRUIT GETS INTO THE PICKING BINS. THE GRAPES ARE RUSHED TO THE WINERY AND PROCESSED WITHIN HOURS OF HARVEST. WE COLD SOAKED THE GRAPES FOR 4 TO 7 DAYS BEFORE PERMITTING FERMENTATION TO COMMENCE WITH NATIVE YEASTS AND TEMPERATURE CONTROL. AT DRYNESS, FREE RUN JUICE WAS DRAINED DIRECTLY TO BARREL AND THE REMAINING BERRIES GENTLY PRESSED AND BARRELED SEPARATELY. THE WINE WAS AGED IN FRENCH OAK BARRELS, 30% NEW, FOR 11 MONTHS WITHOUT RACKING AND WAS BOTTLED UNFINED AND UNFILTERED.

PROPRIETORS/WINEMAKERS

JOHN DRAGONETTE, STEVE DRAGONETTE, & BRANDON SPARKS-GILLIS

PO Box 1932 • SANTA YNEZ • CA • 93460 • 805.737.0200 • 805.558.3215(FAX)
EMAIL: INFO@DRAGONETTECELLARS.COM WEB: DRAGONETTECELLARS.COM