

DRAGONETTE



2020 PINOT NOIR, SANFORD & BENEDICT VINEYARD, STA. RITA HILLS



100% PINOT NOIR

APPELLATION

Sta. Rita Hills

CLONES

“Heritage” selection planted 1972

VITICULTURE (OUR BLOCK)

Organic Practices (Not Certified)

HARVEST DATES

September 25 & October 1

YIELD (TONS PER ACRE)

4.49 TPA

FERMENTATION

1.4 Ton open top fermenters

100% Destemmed

2-3 day cold soak

Native yeasts & MLF

COOPERAGE

100% French Oak (25% new)

AGING

16 months on the lees

BOTTLED

January 21, 2022

ALCOHOL: 14.5%

CASES PRODUCED: 310

SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$75

PHILOSOPHY

We seek to identify exceptional vineyard sites and farming partners in order to source and grow the finest fruit in Santa Barbara. Vineyard blocks are individually managed for appropriate canopy, proper yield, and ideal pick date. We then shepherd this fruit into wine with our own hands. Wines are barreled and aged on their lees until they reach their full potential. The goal is wines of complexity, balance, and textual purity that are also true to both vintage and place.

We bottle single vineyard wines when the wines express a unique character or sense of “place” and yet are complete wines of balance, harmony and interest.

THE VINEYARD

Historic Sanford & Benedict is the original Pinot Noir vineyard (est. 1971) in the Santa Ynez Valley (Sta. Rita Hills was not established until 2001), and it has been the inspiration for winemakers for ever since. Originally planted to a selection of apparently secret “heritage” clones (subsequently expanded and replanted over the years), this magical site simply buzzes with cosmic energy. We purchase fruit here from the original blocks, buying by the acre so we may employ specialized organic farming practices. These stately vines stand tall on their enormous trunks, while still producing a solid crop of beautifully concentrated grapes. The resulting wines display sappy red and black cherry fruits with old-vine style and grace.

THE VINTAGE

2020 was an extraordinary year in Santa Barbara. We fortunately avoided the disastrous firestorms that devastated many of the other major wine growing areas in California. We also largely avoided the effects of extreme heat waves, due to careful canopy management, constant monitoring of the vineyards, dropping of damaged fruit, and picking on precise dates with vigorous field sorting.

Winter was cold delaying budbreak. A cool, wet Spring tamed vigor and extended flowering. Yields were initially average to above average. Summer (July to mid-August) began a pattern of classic SRH days - cool, foggy mornings, warm middays, then cooling winds until sunset. Mid-August saw with the first of four punishing heat events. Fortunately, each heat wave was interspersed with cool periods which allowed the vines to reset. We picked the Pinot Noir in between the heat waves, beginning in late August and continuing into early October.

OUR WINEMAKING

We harvest each individual lot in the cold early morning hours with rigorous hand sorting for quality. We process the fruit within hours, fully destemming in 2020. We cold soak the grapes for 2 to 3 days, then ferment the juice with native yeasts, using a mixture of pumpovers and punchdowns for extraction. At dryness, free run juice is drained to barrel, and the berries gently pressed separately. The wine is aged on its lees for 16 months before selection, blending and bottling without fining or filtration.

PROPRIETORS/WINEMAKERS

John Dragonette, Steve Dragonette, & Brandon Sparks-Gillis