

DRAGONETTE



2022 PINOT NOIR, SANFORD & BENEDICT VINEYARD, STA. RITA HILLS



100% PINOT NOIR

APPELLATION

Sta. Rita Hills

CLONES

“Heritage” selection (Martini via Martin Ray)

667

VITICULTURE (OUR BLOCKS)

Organic Practices (Not Certified)

HARVEST DATES

September 10, 13 & 22

YIELD (TONS PER ACRE)

3.18 - 3.37 TPA

FERMENTATION

1.4 Ton open top fermenters

90% Destemmed, 10% Whole Cluster

2 - 3 day cold soak

Native yeasts & MLF

COOPERAGE

100% French Oak (25% new)

AGING

17 months on the lees

BOTTLED

March 25, 2024

ALCOHOL: 14.1%

CASES PRODUCED: 300

SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$85

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 two distinct blocks of older vines (1999) and oldest vines (1972), 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

2022 was another generally cool year that was upended by a late season heatwave, much like 2020. Winter began with a series of December storms and excellent early rainfall. Unfortunately, there was no rain after January, leaving soils dry by early Spring, which was cool and very windy. Budbreak was early but yields were on the low side due to shatter and drought. Spring and early summer were cool with only a few days of warmth, portending a late year. August turned warmer and ripening accelerated. In early September we faced an extended 7-10 day heatwave, which required careful monitoring, picking and sorting. The east-west orientation of the old vines helped protect the fruit during the heat. Yields suffered from dehydration, but acidities remained solid from the overall cool year. With careful sorting and handling, quality was excellent.

OUR WINEMAKING

We harvest each individual lot in the cold early morning hours with hand sorting in the field by the owners. We process the fruit within hours; the grapes are mostly destemmed without crushing, with a portion of whole cluster added to the fermenters. 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 17 months before bottling without fining or filtration.

PROPRIETORS/WINEMAKERS

John Dragonette, Steve Dragonette, & Brandon Sparks-Gillis