

DRAGONETTE



2019 PINOT NOIR, SANFORD & BENEDICT VINEYARD, STA. RITA HILLS



100% PINOT NOIR

APPELLATION
Sta. Rita Hills

CLONES
“Heritage” selection from 1975

VITICULTURE (OUR BLOCK)
Organic Practices (Not Certified)

HARVEST DATE
September 17

YIELD (TONS PER ACRE)
2.80 TPA

FERMENTATION
1.4 Ton open top fermenters
80% Destemmed, 20% Whole Cluster
2-3 day cold soak
Native yeasts & MLF

COOPERAGE
100% French Oak (40% new)

AGING
16 months on the lees

BOTTLED
January 26, 2021

ALCOHOL: 13.4%

CASES PRODUCED: 120

SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$75

PHILOSOPHY

We strive to create Pinot Noirs of textural purity, complexity and balance. Complexity and balance are achieved by meticulous attention to detail in the vineyard, where each vineyard block is managed for appropriate canopy and proper yields. Textural purity can only result where the delicate and ethereal Pinot Noir is very gently handled and manipulations in the cellar eschewed. We age our wines on their lees, without racking, with little movement and constant topping. Moreover, each wine is bottled only after sufficient time in barrel to permit ideal evolution.

We bottle single vineyard wines when wines from a particular vineyard 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 classic sappy red and black cherry fruits, but with a signature, old-vine style and grace.

THE VINTAGE

2019 was a classic cool-climate year in the Sta. Rita Hills. A wet and cold winter cleansed vineyard soils and provided a good profile of soil moisture. A cool Spring helped to delay budbreak until late March and to control vigor. Cool weather and windy conditions around bloom resulted in an extended flowering, but we saw a decent sized if uneven crop set in Pinot Noir. June was warm, but July and early August were generally cooler allowing maturity while retaining acidity. Late August introduced significant heat, quickening the ripening of the Pinot Noir. We performed a significant green drop in August, and the remaining crop was perfectly ripe with great acidity.

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; some is fully destemmed without crushing, some is fermented with a percentage of whole clusters. 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 and blending. Bottled unfiltered.

PROPRIETORS/WINEMAKERS

John Dragonette, Steve Dragonette, & Brandon Sparks-Gillis