



Huber

2004 ESTATE PINOT NOIR Santa Rita Hills

There are many compelling reasons why Santa Rita Hills is being lauded as perhaps one of the best regions in the United States for growing Pinot Noir. The west-to-east orientation of the valley channels early morning fog from the nearby Pacific Ocean over the vineyards of the appellation. The warming sun appears mid-morning, along with ocean breezes around noon, providing a natural air-conditioner along with a long, full day of full sunshine. This cool climate region rarely sees temperatures above 75° - a picture perfect place for Pinot Noir. Add to that the established vines of the Huber Vineyard reaching deep into the clay loam soil and you have a perfect equation for extraordinary Pinot Noir. In fact, the Huber Vineyard was one of the first vineyards planted in Santa Rita Hills, fifteen years ago.

There could not have been another year when the age of the vines was so appreciated. A severe heat spike and unusual weather patterns in the early part of September caused concern among Pinot Noir producers of the region, with overnight ripening and elevated sugar levels all around. The deep roots and established canopies of the Huber Vineyard, however, were better able to contend with the heat, and the Pinot was picked in good condition the second week of September. The result is an exceptional wine; complex, full of character, nicely balanced and well structured. A first glance hints of delights to come, as the color is a lovely shade of magenta with purple-garnet edges. The bouquet is all Pinot Noir and Santa Rita Hills, with blueberry, sage and a bit of caramel. The taste of the wine echoes the aromas, adding black cherry, dark ripe plums and rhubarb, and followed by a lingering and enjoyable finish replete with hints of hazelnut and earthiness.

The Pinot Noir on the estate is clone 115, and is on its own roots. After being hand harvested early in the morning, the grapes were 100% de-stemmed into small 4x4 fermenters and then allowed a cool-soak before the onset of fermentation. After completion of fermentation, the new wines were gravity racked to French oak barrels, 20% of which were new and completed malo-lactic fermentation in the barrel. The 2004 vintage was bottled in August, 2005. 118 cases were produced.

Huber Vineyards & Cellar
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