



Huber

2005 ESTATE PINOT NOIR
Sta. Rita Hills

There are many compelling reasons why Santa Rita Hills is being lauded as 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 sandy 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, back in 1987; the Pinot Noir block was planted in 1995 and 100% clone 115.

2005 was one of those years that happens very rarely – the weather in the spring was perfect as the vines flowered, producing, by usual standards, a good number of grape clusters per vine. And these clusters grew to be slightly larger than usual. Then the weather in early fall was perfect – warm days and cold nights allowed this larger than usual crop to develop perfectly. The Pinot was picked by hand in late September.

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 malolactic fermentation in the barrel. The 2005 vintage was bottled in August, 2006. 250 cases were produced.

The wine has brilliant clarity - a cherry-red color with 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.