



2002 Pinot Noir Melville Vineyard

Ron Melville came to me in the mid nineties and told me of his new venture. He purchased acreage on both sides of Babcock Vineyard in the Santa Rita Hills appellation in Northern Santa Barbara Co. and planned to plant grapes and start a winery. He wanted to plant grapes for me also. We picked out a bit over two beautiful acres and I chose the old (tasty) clones of Pinot Noir (2A for structure, 9 & 16 for flavor). Ron thought I was nuts for not picking the macho new super clones...but that is another story. This is the third bottling of my fruit from this new Santa Rita Hills appellation. This wine is perfect. It has more of a floral note in the nose compared to my other wines so I have dubbed it Flower Child.

I harvested 4.25 tons off of my area. That is a bit less than 2 tons per acre. The fruit came in about a month earlier than last year due to the mild winter. I gently crushed (100% destemmed) into 4' by 4' by 4' open top fermenter bins, avoiding the harsh wood tannins from stems. The juice was fermented with Aussmanhausen yeast to retain the fruity components. Punch down routines were performed to maximize the delicate flavors and subtle, elegant nuances of the Pinot Noir grape without extracting the more coarse, alcohol soluble components. The wine spent about 12 months in Francois Frere oak barrels. I used about 25% new wood to obtain a trace taste without overshadowing the fruit. The wine is unfinned and gently filtered for clarity. It will naturally throw some sediments over time.

The Melville Pinot is the most forward and in your face Pinot that I make. It has that monster extraction that many of the SRH Pinots show. The tannins are bigger than my other Pinots and so is the fruit. Plush cherry fruit offset by anise, violet, and smoked meat aromas set the stage. Finely balanced herb, cola and dark fruit flavors slide into a finish of dried spice, coffee and pepper notes. This is a wine to drink now and will also be a winner with long cellar age. This is also the best buy of my Pinot family.

Back Label: Life should make you tingly inside

Cases Produced: 271

Harvest Date: 9/11/02

Numbers @ Harvest: Brix 24.0 pH 3.17 TA 0.93

Wine Numbers: 13.8% Alc. 3.47 pH No R.S.