



2005 Pinot Noir Bien Nacido Vineyard

Cases Produced: 264
Harvest Date: 9/1/2005
Numbers @ Harvest: 22.0 Brix
Wine Numbers: 13.0% Alc. 3.46 pH No R.S.

The 2005 harvest was neither early nor late. The crop was big but all of the clusters were normal size. The picking bins smelled like a load of fresh strawberries. Once again, I was able to pick at a lower sugar, which reflects in my lower alcohols. The fruit arrived at the winery looking very clean and picture perfect. The 2005 Bien Nacido is pure N block, rows 62-76 (Martini clone on it's own rootstock, planted 1973) and is just the happy boyish charm Pinot Noir that we have come to expect from this premiere vineyard. The nose holds strawberry, plum, blackberry and winter herbs. The mouth is extremely well balanced with silky tannins and a long and spicy finish. The aftertaste is always sweet and clean. White pepper is lingering somewhere in the flavors. This is a very marked characteristic of many red grapes from the Bien Nacido Vineyard.

I gently destemmed (100%) into 4' by 4' by 4' open top fermenters, avoiding the harsh wood tannins from stems. The juice was fermented with Ausmanhausen 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 fermentation took about two weeks. The wine spent about 11 months in Francois Frere French oak barrels. I used 35% new wood to obtain a trace taste of smoke and spice without overshadowing the fruit. The wine is unfinned and gently filtered (I call it rock and frog filtering) for visual clarity. I bottled this wine on August 11th. It may naturally throw some sediment over time. All of my wines are Very low in sulfites because I am personally allergic to them.

Pure, perfectly ripened fruit is ever the dominant theme for this baby. Strawberry fruit framed by sweet oak and hints of allspice and mace move into a positively plush finish. This vineyard is becoming very well known and has been featured in a number of magazines in past years including Food and Wine, Gourmet, Wines and Spirits and The Wine Enthusiast..

This year's vintage is very supple and lush right from the start. The wine dropped clean in November, about four months before it usually does. It also tasted drinkable about the same time. I usually don't spend much time tasting my young wines but it was sooo good, I wanted to show it off to everyone. Every vintage is different. The 2004 was one to cellar for a few years and this 2005 vintage is one to revel in!

Back Label...When are we going to live, if not now....