



2024 SIERRA MAR VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

SIERRA MAR VINEYARD

Sierra Mar is the southernmost site that our family owns and manages. It is our highest in elevation at up to 1,100 feet above sea level. In 2007, Gary Francioni painstakingly planted it, and drilled a well which pumps water three miles up the hillsides to make irrigation possible. The heavily sloped terrain and thin soils encourage deep root systems and drainage. Its elevation often places Sierra Mar around the fogline, adding to its diversity and mystique. This slightly warmer site also experiences heavy winds in the afternoon along with cooler nights help retain natural acidity.

WINEMAKER NOTES

From the high elevations of Sierra Mar, where sweeping views overlook the valley below, this Pinot Noir reflects the vineyard's layered terrain and diverse clonal mix. Aromas of violet perfume, black cherry, and plum lead into a medium-full palate that builds from dark cherry and chaparral into savory notes of charcuterie, clove, and cinnamon. The finish lifts with red fruit, white pepper, and herbal texture, revealing Sierra Mar's exotic and spiced expression.

VINTAGE SUMMARY

The 2024 vintage opened with a return to normal winter rainfall at approximately 13 inches. While our region remains inherently cool, the summer brought a run of 85+ degree days compared to especially cool recent vintages like 2023 and 2025. A brief burst of heat around Labor Day initiated harvest in our earlier-ripening blocks, and was followed by a cool, steady Fall that extended hangtime and allowed flavors to deepen. These conditions produced a harvest that unfolded in two distinct phases: early lots offered vibrant, juicy fruit with bright natural acidity, while later lots had developed concentrated flavors and richer textures. Together, these contrasting components created exceptional blending opportunities in the cellar.

Winemaker: Scott Shapley

Appellation: Santa Lucia Highlands

Farming: Sustainable (SIP Certified)

Harvest: August 27 - Sept. 26, 2024

Clones: 667, Pisoni Clone, Swan, 943

Oak: 100% French oak, 62% new

Aging: 10 months in barrel

Acid: 3.64 pH

Alcohol: 14.8%

2024: 97 pts, *Jeb Dunnuck*

2023: 96 pts, *International Wine Report*

2022: 95 pts, *Lisa Perrotti-Brown, MW*

2021: 95 pts, *Wine Enthusiast*

2020: Not produced due to CA wildfires

2019: 96 pts, *Wine Enthusiast*

2018: 95 pts, *Robert Parker*

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TECH NOTE ARCHIVE

Vintage	Harvest	Days on Skins	Time in Barrel	Oak	Alc.	Bottle Date	Clones	pH	Growing Season
2024	9/11/24 – 9/26/24	20 – 24 days	10 months	French; 62% new (Francois Frerer, Remond, Cadus, Billon, Damy)	14.8%	8/13/25	667, Pisoni, Swan, 943	3.64	Small berries with thick skins promoted wines with structure and deep character. Harvest unfolded in two phases with early lots bringing vibrant, juicy fruit and bright natural acidity, while later picks developed greater concentration and richer textures.
2023	10/7/23 – 10/17/23	25 – 29 days	10 months	French; 65% new (Remond, Francois Frerer, Cadus, Latour)	14.8%	8/8/24	667, Calera, 943, Pisoni, Swan, Pommard	3.72	Generous winter rains replenished vines. Budbreak, bloom, and veraison occurred 2 weeks later than average. Cool and mild spring and summer. Long hangtime with our latest harvest since 1999.
2022	9/1/22 – 9/14/22	21 – 29 days (avg. 23)	10 months	French; 62% new (Remond, Francois Frerer)	14.6%	8/3/23	Calera, Pisoni, 943, Swan	3.67	Low yields. Warm spring and summer punctuated by a labor day heat wave. Earlier than average harvest was aided by quicker ripening clusters due to low yields.
2021	9/20/21 – 10/9/21	21 – 26 days	10 months	French; 67% new (Francois Frerer, Remond, Ermitage, Latour, Cadus, Damy); 15% concrete	14.7%	8/25/22	Swan, Pisoni, Calera, 943, 23, 777, Pommard	3.74	Fruit was dropped early in 2020, so vines entered the vintage with little stress. Low rainfall with growing milestones tracking 2–3 weeks behind. Very even temperatures and balanced wines.
2020	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Not produced due to California wildfires.
2019	9/16/19 – 10/7/19	19 – 23 days	10 months	French; 67% new (Francois Frerer, Remond, Cadus, Ermitage)	14.7%	8/18/20	Swan, Pisoni, Calera, 943	3.76	Cool temperatures and heavier-than-average fog cover, conditions that encouraged slow, even ripening. A late rise in warmth brought the vines into perfect balance for harvest. Elegant and polished wines.
2018	9/14/18 – 9/28/18	20 – 25 days	10 months	French; 61% new (Francois Frerer, Remond, Cadus, Ermitage, Latour)	14.8%	8/7/19	Swan, Pisoni, Calera, 943	3.77	Cool spring, slightly less than average rainfall. Perfect fruit set, warm days and cool nights during the summer. A cool fall allowed for a classic harvest with optimal conditions.
2017	9/2/17 – 9/6/17	19 – 32 days	10 months	French; 71% new (Francois Frerer, Remond, Ermitage, Cadus, Seguin Moreau)	14.8%	7/12/18	Swan, Pisoni, Calera, 943	3.78	Above average. winter and spring rain. Dry and cool summer with cool nights. A significant labor day heat wave accelerated harvest. Active canopy management and picking decisions preserved freshness.
2016	9/7/16 – 9/17/16	22 – 27 days	10 months	French; 71% new (Remond, Francois Frerer, Ermitage, Seguin Moreau)	14.7%	7/12/17	Swan, Pisoni, Calera, 943	3.82	First non-drought year since 2012. Extended harvest time frame with clean and ripe fruit.
2015	8/26/15 – 9/5/15	23 – 37 days	10 months	French; 70% new (Ermitage, Francois Frerer, Remond, Latour, Cadus, Seguin Moreau)	14.5%	7/8/16	Swan, Pisoni, 828	3.77	An unusually warm winter spawned an early budbreak 2-weeks ahead of normal. A cold spell during flowering resulted in shatter leading to a light crop with small berries. A dry summer followed with an early harvest.
2014	9/3/14 – 9/30/14	27 days	11 months	French; 69% new (Ermitage, Remond, Francois Frerer, Cadus, Seguin Moreau, Latour)	14.8%	August 2015	Swan, Pisoni, 828	3.76	A similar season to 2013, with moderate-to-low yields and small, healthy berries that concentrated flavor and structure. An early harvest produced wines with ripe fruit, freshness, and strong aging potential.
2013	9/7/13 – 9/24/13	20 – 26 days	11 months	French; 51% new	14.9%	8/14/14	Swan, Pisoni	3.76	Warm and dry conditions led to early flowering and an early harvest with generous yields. The wines boasted ripe fruit with good ageing potential.