



2023 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

This high-elevation Pinot Noir from our dramatic estate vineyard offers an alluring bouquet of violet perfume, black cherry, plum, and a touch of sagebrush. The palate unfolds with vibrant black cherry, and clove, deepening into spiced fruit, vanilla, and violet pastilles. Hints of blueberry emerge on the back palate, leading to a smooth, long finish of spice and anise. Balanced acidity and textured tannins complement its floral and dark fruit character. While a huge undertaking to plant and farm this property, each sip is as stunning as the vineyard it hails from.

VINTAGE SUMMARY

The 2023 season rewarded patience and precision. Generous winter rains of 22.5 inches, well above our typical 14 inches, replenished vines and fostered healthy canopies, minimizing irrigation needs. Budbreak, bloom, and veraison arrived about two weeks later than average. A mild spring and summer gave way to a long, gentle ripening period. A brief warm spell in early October pushed the fruit to optimal ripeness, leading to a brisk harvest that was later than normal. In the cellar, fermentations were slow and steady, allowing the wines to develop beautifully.

Winemaker: Scott Shapley
Appellation: Santa Lucia Highlands
Farming: Sustainable (SIP Certified)
Harvest: October 7 - 17, 2023
Oak: 100% French oak, 62% new
Aging: 10 months in barrel
Alcohol: 14.8%
Acid: 3.68 pH
Production: 415 cases made

2023: 95 pts, *Jeb Dunnuck*
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*
2017: Top 100 Wines, *Wine Spectator*
Top 100 Wines, *Wine Enthusiast*