

STEMMLER

2011 CARNEROS ESTATE GROWN PINOT NOIR

The Stemmler Carneros Estate Grown Pinot Noir is sourced entirely from our 45-acre vineyard of 20-year-old vines planted in nine contiguous blocks to four different clones. Our Carneros Estate Pinot Noir truly represents the diversity of clones and sites within our vineyard, with the blend composed of all nine distinct blocks within the vineyard. The result is layered and complex, evocative of our windswept, fog-covered vineyards.

The 2011 Stemmler Carneros Estate Pinot Noir is pale ruby in color, with aromas of Bing cherry, sage, sous bois, and just-ripe blackberry. The palate is red-fruit driven, with strawberry, cranberry and cherry flavors joined by orange peel, toast, and mineral notes. Light-bodied with spicy, fresh-fruit flavors, the wine gains intensity on the palate, finishing with dark berry and earthy flavors.



FRUIT: 100% Estate Grown Pinot Noir from Carneros, 42% Donum-Roederer selection, 30% Calera, 18% Dijon, 10% Martini

HARVEST DATE: OCTOBER 2-13, 2011

BOTTLING DATE: AUGUST 14, 2012

PRODUCTION: 1596 CASES

ALCOHOL: 13.8

PH: 3.60

TA: 5.8 g/L

BARREL PROGRAM: 20% new French oak (Francois Freres, Ermitage, Remond)

FERMENTATION DETAILS:

Each of the four blocks that goes into our Estate Pinot is hand-harvested and fermented separately, with each lot receiving slightly different treatment. All of the lots cold soak for 3-7 days, with some lots inoculated with RC212 yeast, and others allowed to ferment using native yeast. In general the must will reach 90-92F during the peak of fermentation, with 3-4 punchdowns per day as well as the occasional pumpover. Some of the lots are pressed once dry, while others remain on the skin for up to two weeks of extended maceration. The wine is barreled down to French oak (about 20% new), where it undergoes malolactic fermentation. After about 10 months in barrel we taste each barrel, selecting our favorite blend from all lots. The final blend was racked to tank and bottled in August, 2012.

WEATHER ATTRIBUTES:

There is no doubt that 2011 was an unusual year in California weather-wise, with cool temperatures and lots of precipitation being the key factors. After a warm, sunny start to the year, temperatures dropped steadily, with daytime highs rarely breaking 80F and plenty of rain all the way through the end of June. Budbreak occurred about three weeks later than usual, thanks to the cold weather, and flowering was somewhat disrupted by the rain, resulting in a crop size 10-30% lower than average depending on the block.

Once the rain stopped, temperatures remained below normal throughout the summer, further slowing the ripening process. In some ways this was a good thing, as it allowed the fruit to ripen slowly, developing flavor without a huge jump in sugar levels. Everyone kept saying that this could lead to an exceptional harvest, barring rain in early October. As it turned out, the rain decided not to wait until October, with a massive storm dropping over an inch of rain on September 30 and October 1.

With sugars low and ripeness not quite where we wanted it, we decided to hang the majority of our Estate fruit through the rain. Thanks to the steady winds consistently streaming off of the the San Pablo Bay, the fruit dried out well after the rain, and some warmer weather got things going again in the vineyard. A second, smaller rainstorm hit the following week, and with the warmer weather the potential for mold to develop dictated that it was time to pick the fruit. While not as ripe as we would see in a typical vintage, the fruit showed beautiful red-fruit flavors and wonderful acidity. 2011 is probably not the kind of vintage we would like to see every year, but it was educational to encounter the weather problems that vintners in Burgundy and Oregon see frequently, and the resulting wines show remarkable elegance and finesse.

REDUCE - REUSE - RECYCLE 