

STEMMLER

2009 FERGUSON BLOCK CARNEROS PINOT NOIR

Stemmler wines are handcrafted, limited releases of estate grown varietals. The mission of our dedicated vineyard and winemaking team is to produce world-class wines noteworthy in style and intensity. Located atop the first rolling hills in the Carneros region that rise up from San Pablo Bay, Ferguson Block lies less than a mile east of Donum Ranch. The oldest vineyard in The Donum Estate, it was planted in 1974 with an old Martini selection of Pinot Noir on St. George rootstock in gravelly, loamy clay soils.

Our 2009 Ferguson Block Pinot Noir is medium ruby in color, with a focused nose of cherry, raspberry, strawberry pie, and graham cracker. The palate is incredibly fresh and lively, with cherry, cranberry, raspberry, apple skin, and spicy minerality. Elegant and refined, this is a classically styled pinot noir designed to gracefully accompany a wide range of food pairings.



FRUIT: 100% Carneros Pinot Noir from the 35 year old vines of the Ferguson Vineyard

HARVEST DATE: September 25 - October 2

PRODUCTION: 67 cases

ALCOHOL: 14.4%

PH: 3.57

TOTAL ACIDITY: 6.3g/L

BARREL PROGRAM: 100% once-used French oak barrels

FERMENTATION DETAILS:

The fruit is hand-harvested, hand-sorted, entirely de-stemmed and moved to temperature-controlled, open-top stainless steel tanks by gravity flow. The must is cold-soaked for four days before fermentation. Fermentations are hot, between 88° and 92° F., and last five to nine days for maximum extraction. The cap is hand-plunged four times daily during fermentation, with occasional pumping over to allow the yeast exposure to oxygen. Upon completion of fermentation, the wine is left for extended maceration from two to six days, before being barreled down and moved to the cellar where malolactic fermentation takes place in barrel

AGING AND BLENDING DETAILS:

Only free run wine is used for the final blend. Wine goes directly to barrel to retain lees for aging. The wine is aged in specially designated 1-year old French oak barrels, which pair beautifully with the delicate flavors of this old-vine Pinot Noir. The final blend is assembled in the spring and put back to barrel for another 10 months to allow the components to marry, develop and age in barrel, finally being bottled after 18 months in oak.

WEATHER ATTRIBUTES

After 2008, 2009 seemed like a breeze. Starting the season, we had enough soil moisture from winter rains to promise a good vintage. Flowering occurred the third week of May, pushed by a small heat spike. When flowering comes on rapidly, pollination is often poor, causing small berries and shatter (berries fail to develop). As winegrowers, we like small berries and loose clusters, which are precursors for quality. Small berries translate into higher skin-to-juice ratios, giving us more intensity. Loose clusters create space between berries and allow air flow for less mold pressure and clean fruit.

For most of June, July and August, we were blessed with mild temperatures, with only a few days reaching into the 90's. Humidity stayed in the 30's, enough moisture to prevent stress on the vines. The last 30 days prior to harvest are very important. September followed the earlier pattern of moderate temperatures with a few blips in the 90's that helped ripening along.

Our harvest was long and drawn out as we were not pushed by heat or rain to pick. We were able to harvest slowly, letting each block ripen to the fullest. Our vineyards are divided into many small blocks of three to five acres. Even so, they are all Pinot Noir; they vary in clone / selection, rootstock, soil and exposure, causing variance in ripening.

We are very excited about the 2009's. They have the power and structure of the 2007 vintage combined with the juiciness and sweetness of 2008. One suggestion: try to cellar a few bottles as they will be wonderful treats in years to come. Cheers.

REDUCE - REUSE - RECYCLE 