



2002 Pinot Noir Bien Nacido Vineyard

The 2002 Pinot Noir crop was very small in Santa Barbara County. My production level went from six hundred cases to a little over two hundred cases this year. This produced grapes with a bigger, bolder nature than usual. The fruit arrived at the winery looking very clean and picture perfect. The 2002 Bien Nacido is pure N block (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 vintage is rounder and more opulent than usual. The nose holds cherry, plum, blackberry and Chinese five spice. The mouth is extremely well balanced with silky tannins and a long and spicy finish.

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 Aussmanhausen 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 wine spent about 12 months in Francois Frere oak barrels. I used 35% new wood to obtain a trace taste without overshadowing the fruit. This is a bit more new wood than usual for me, but I think the wine needed it. The wine is unfinned and gently filtered for visual clarity. It may naturally throw some sediments over time.

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

Back Label...Laugh More..Flirt Often

Cases Produced: 231

Harvest Date: 9/10/02

Numbers @ Harvest: 24.3 Brix

Wine Numbers: 13.9% Alc. 3.54 pH No R.S.