



2003 Pinot Noir Bien Nacido Vineyard

Cases Produced: 234

Harvest Date: 9/2/03

Numbers @ Harvest: 23.8

Brix Wine Numbers: 13.7% Alc. 3.56 pH No R.S.

The 2003 Pinot Noir crop was, once again, very small in Santa Barbara County. My production level was almost exactly the same this year as it was in 2002. This produced grapes with a bigger, bolder nature than usual. The fruit arrived at the winery looking very clean and picture perfect. The 2003 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. Truth be told, the 2001, 2002 and 2003 vintages are all very similar. 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. White pepper is always lingering somewhere in the flavors. This is a very marked characteristics of many red grapes from the Bien Nacido Vineyard

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 Ausmanhausen 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. The wine is unfinned and gently filtered for visual clarity. It may naturally throw some sediment 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 in past years including Food and Wine, Gourmet, Wines and Spirits and The Wine Enthusiast..

Back Label...Last night I dreamed we partied with Elvis