



2003 Pinot Noir Melville Vineyard

Ron Melville came to me in the mid nineties and told me of his new venture. He purchased acreage on both sides of Babcock Vineyard in the Santa Rita Hills appellation in Northern Santa Barbara Co. and planned to plant grapes and start a winery. He wanted to plant grapes for me also. We picked out a bit over two beautiful acres and I chose the old (tasty) clones of Pinot Noir (2A for structure, 9 & 16 for flavor). This is the fourth bottling of my fruit from this new Santa Rita Hills appellation. This wine is perfect. It has more of an earthy note in the nose compared to my other wines and is the youngest vineyard that I use, so I have dubbed it Flower Child.

I harvested 2.44 tons off of my area. That is very low tonnage per acre! The fruit came in about the same time as last year. I gently crushed (100% destemmed) into 4' by 4' by 4' open top fermenter bins, 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 about 25% new wood to obtain a trace taste without overshadowing the fruit. The wine is unfinned and gently filtered for clarity. It will naturally throw some sediment over time.

The Melville Pinot is the most forward and in your face Pinot that I make. It has that monster extraction that many of the SRH Pinots show. The tannins are bigger than my other Pinots due to the 2A clone and the fruit and earthiness abound. This wine is very reminiscent of Burgundy. Plush cherry fruit offset by anise, violet, and smoked meat aromas set the stage. Finely balanced herb, cola and dark fruit flavors slide into a finish of dried spice, coffee and pepper notes. This is a wine to drink now and will also be a winner with long cellar age. This is also the best buy of my Pinot family. Back Label: Last night I dreamed we were Fred and Ginger

Cases Produced: 168

Harvest Date: 9/2/03

Numbers @ Harvest: Brix 24.5 pH 3.25 TA 0.85

Wine Numbers: 13.9% Alc. 3.53 pH No R.S.