



STEELE PINOT NOIR

SANTA BARBARA 2011



VINEYARDS

Bien Nacido, a nine hundred acre vineyard a few miles east of Santa Maria, is well known for its Chardonnay and Pinot Noir plantings. For years, Jed Steele has sourced Pinot Noir from this famous site for our vineyard designated "Block N" bottling. For the Santa Barbara label, we pick from Block F, a younger-vine bench land site, and blend it with grapes from the lower elevation Goodchild Vineyard. The interplay between the Bien Nacido's bench land site and the Goodchild's sandy riverside soils make for a wine with great nuances and harmony.

SEASON

2011 began as a cool growing season with late April frosts combined with intense winds. Fog persisted through August and well into September. Fortunately, October turned out ideal conditions which aided in the ripening of the fruit. Even though conditions were mainly difficult and the crop was lighter, the Pinot Noir provided us a well-balanced style of wine with crisp natural acidity.

WINE STYLE & TASTING NOTES

We take a hands-off approach with our pinots beginning with "rollers out" at the crusher, a process where the berries are left virtually intact at destemming. From there, it's largely a kid-glove handling of slow fermentation and long, gentle pressing. Finally, resting the finished wine in oak (20% new French) for about eight months.

The velvety nose yields a strawberry and rose perfume quality. Dried cherries lead the palate, followed by hints of wild strawberries. Lovely floral notes shine before ending on a spicy note.

FOOD PAIRINGS

Roast pheasant with a cherry and almond chutney, or with creamy polenta with mushrooms and eggplant.

APPELLATION Santa Barbara **HARVEST DATES** October 13th, 2011 **ALCOHOL** 13.9% **BRIX** Average 24.0 **FERMENTATION** Barrel Fermented **pH** 3.67 **TA** .65g/100mL **BARREL AGING** 8 months in used French oak **VINE AGE** Avg. 20 years **YIELDS** 3 tons per acre
CASE PRODUCTION 1500 cases