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, 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
2012 was a very good growing season with hardly any rain throughout the year and harvest. A beautiful spring and summer were punctuated by late season heat spikes. The heat spikes ripened the grapes with maintaining acid balance. Harvest conditions were ideal and the season produced quality, focused wines.

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 de-stemming. From there, it's largely a kid-glove handling of slow fermentation and long, gentle pressing. Finally, resting the finished wine in oak (30% new French) for about eight months.

The velvety nose yields a strawberry and 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.

APPENDATION Santa Barbara HARVEST DATES October 15th, 2012
ALCOHOL 14.9% BRIX Average 24.0 FERMENTATION Barrel Fermented pH 3.71 TA .65g/100mL BARREL AGING 8 months in used French oak VINEAGE Avg. 20 years
YIELDS 3 tons per acre CASE PRODUCTION 1500 cases