

BJØRNSTAD CELLARS

2008 Hellenthal Vineyard Pinot noir

Vineyard Notes

Gard Hellenthal and his wife Lori are long time residents of the rugged Sonoma Coast, planting their first vines to Pinot noir in 1980. Recent arrivals to the neighborhood include Flowers Vineyard and Winery, Hellen Turley's Marcassin Vineyard, Peter Michael and Jason Pahlmeyer. The extreme conditions of this part of Sonoma County shape the land, the people and the wine and grapes grown there. Just 5 miles from the Pacific Ocean, winters can be long, cold and wet, buffeted by winds from intense storms reaching the mainland. Summers are generally dry and cool due to the moderating effect of the onshore breezes and summer fog pattern. The magic of the site comes together as the elevation of the vineyard at 1200 feet sits above the coastal fog, blanketing the surrounding valleys, keeping the temperatures cool, ideal for extraordinary development of Pinot noir structure and flavors. The soils are well drained decomposing sandstone of the Franciscan series which causes the vines to dig deep for their sustenance. These two natural resources naturally conspire to control vine vigor, ensuring very low yields and very concentrated wines.

In 2000, Gard retained my vineyard consulting services to help him establish his 'New Block'. Together, we developed this block with the intention that one day, I would buy the fruit for my own wine project. The wines produced from this block are deeply colored, structured wines that emphasize dark fruits and spice.

Tasting Notes

This wine shows classic acid and tannin structure typical of Pinot noir hailing from the extreme Sonoma Coast. From the first pour, the glass is filled with aromas of cherries, sandalwood and spice. East Indian spices are hallmarks of these coastal Pinot noir and they further lift and add dimension to the complexity of the wine. The fruit and spice flavors follow the aromas onto the palate with layers of licorice and bright fruit, culminating in a long, pure finish. This Pinot noir will stand up to the most robust food and wine pairing and continue to evolve and improve with aging.

Production: 175 Cases

Release date: November 15, 2010

Suggested retail: \$40

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