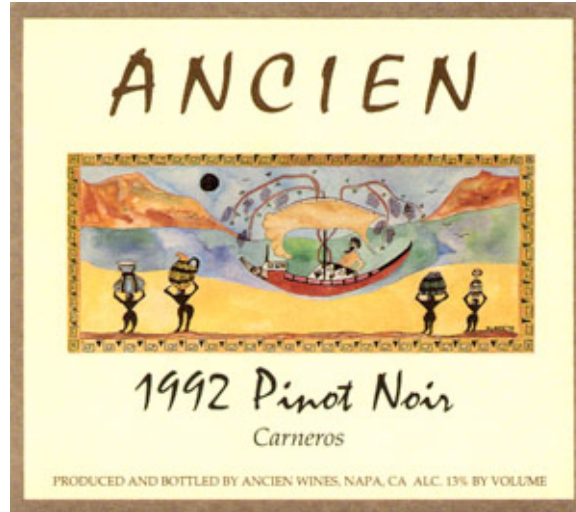


Ancien Wines

1992 Carneros Pinot Noir



ABOUT THE VINEYARD...

The 1992 Ancien Pinot noir comes from 20 year old vines in the Carneros region of the Napa Valley. The vineyard is located on a north-eastern slope in thin clay/loam soil with excellent drainage. The combination of vine age and the north eastern slope (sheltering the vines from the brisk Carneros winds) makes this a unique site. The fruit expresses itself with earthy, mushroom, and sometimes meaty aromas underneath the more typical "Carneros cherry fruit" along with anise, spice, and blackberry. It is the complexity of this fruit that we found appealing in our selection of this site.

ABOUT THE VINTAGE...

The harvest of 1992 will be remembered for the miracle March rains. Being the fourth year of a drought, reservoirs were low and vines may well have run out of water (and energy) by harvest. Struggling vines may make great wines but stressed vines make lousy wines. With the March rain came enough vegetative growth and enough water in the soil profile to carry the vines well into July. A few small drinks allowed the vines to mature its small crop by the 1st of September. Below average yields (perhaps attributable to those same March rains) aided in producing grapes with exceptionally concentrated flavors.

ABOUT THE WINE...

The grapes were 100% destemmed into an open top fermenter and punched down 3 times per day at the beginning of fermentation. This was decreased to 2 times per day by the end of fermentation. A small inoculum of "Assmannshausen" cultured yeast made for a very slow start to fermentation, allowing for extraction of flavanoids and color. Still, once the fermentation started, it peaked early in the fermentation(at 92°F) allowing for full extraction of the grapes. The wine was gently pressed four days after dryness by hand in a basket press and went directly to barrel. The wine was then aged in Francois Freres and Billon barrels and was racked once in the Spring. In September it was bottled by hand using a gravity filler.

The 1992 vintage produced wines with impressive intensity and a fair bit of tannin and structure. The fruit intensity makes them attractive to drink now with the structure to continue develop. The 1992 Ancien is drinking well upon release, but should continue to develop at least 5 years.

TASTING NOTES...

Blackberry, cherry, cassis, anise, slight mint and bay leaves in the aromas overlaid on plummy, anise, cola, dark chocolate, and coffee flavors with lingering blackberry fruit and spice. Great length and complexity! Drink or hold 5 - 7 years.