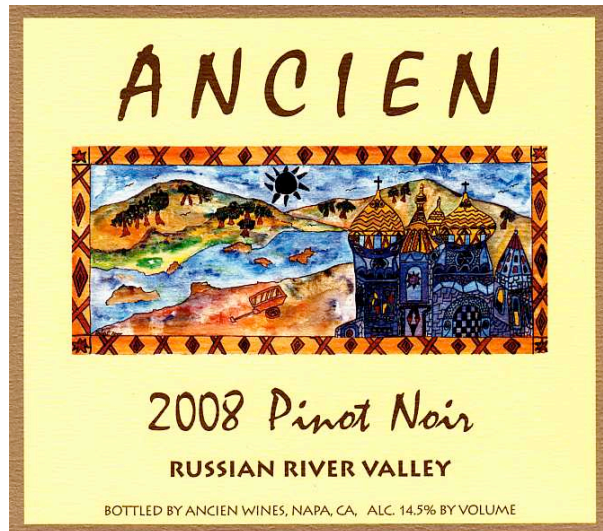


Ancien Wines

2008 Russian River Pinot Noir



ABOUT THE VINEYARD...

The vast majority of this vintage comes from Gilbert Perez's two acre vineyard in the southwestern corner of the appellation, only nominally protected by the coastal hills and open to the maritime influence of the Pacific Ocean. The soils here are loose, sandy, and well-drained, typical for the Russian River Valley, and known for producing explosive and aromatic fruit flavors balanced with acidity and earthy aromas. All seventeen rows are planted with Dijon 115 clones, which tend to add perfumed aromas and light spice notes to the lush fruitiness obtained from the soils.

ABOUT THE VINTAGE...

2008 was a lesson in the primary importance of balance in the vineyard. A drier than usual winter exacerbated the existing drought conditions, and a late spring series of frosty mornings cut down the yields considerably. A summer full of warm mornings coddled the fruit as it developed and made for an earlier than average harvest. The lower yields made it possible for the vines to withstand the stress of the drought and deliver healthy, ripe fruit full of concentrated fruit flavor. The vines achieved this level of balance naturally, and what started out like difficult year resolved itself into a very solid vintage.

ABOUT THE WINE...

We fermented in our one ton, open-top tanks, layering the bottom 25% of each tank with whole clusters of fruit, adding structure and spice notes to the back palate and balancing the otherwise plush fruit of Gilbert's Vineyard. In addition, we added a small amount of Dijon clones 115 and 777 from the Archer Vineyard. A warm fermentation with a combination of native and isolated Burgundian yeasts produced excellent and focused flavor extraction, complemented and completed with traditional punch-downs by hand. The wine was aged entirely in Francois Freres cooperage, half new, and racked once, gently, prior to bottling. Grapes, must, and wines were moved using gravity through to the barrel and using inert gas through racking and bottling. 437 cases produced.

TASTING NOTES...

As is usual for this wine, the nose and palate mirror and reference one another with repeating themes of concentrated dark fruits and rich, earthy spices. Black cherry, plums, blackberry, cassis, strawberry pie, and candied violet layer over top of hidden whiffs of cherry cola, cinnamon, tilled earth, holiday spice, and aromatic tobaccos on the nose. Similar dark and juicy fruit flavors explode on the palate, expanding throughout the mid-palate while also revealing hints of red fruits and underlying layers of pepper, vanilla bean, espresso bean, and cacao. Smoky tannins draw out a finish of light strawberries and plums. Normally considered our most hedonistic Pinot Noir, the 2008 vintage from the Russian River emphasizes this unctuous and indulgent side of the often sophisticated Pinot Noir grape. This wine drinks well in its youth. Time will temper the concentration somewhat and bring out subtle layers of spice and the silken texture that hides behind the powerful fruit for the next 5-7 years.

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