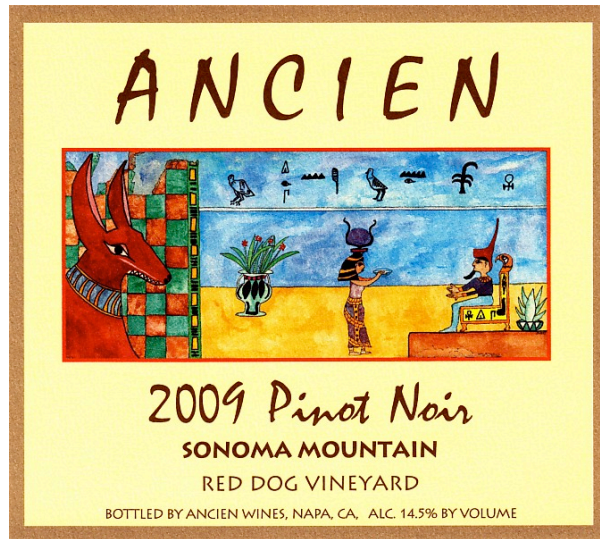


# Ancien Wines

## 2009 Sonoma Mountain Pinot Noir



### **ABOUT THE VINEYARD...**

The Red Dog Vineyard sits atop Sonoma Mountain on the cool, western side. It was planted in 2000 by Tom and Debbie Engel. It is planted mostly to Swan Selection with cuttings from the Mink Vineyard, with a smaller block of Dijon clones 777 and 115. The vineyard is situated on the eastern face of a ridge, and the top is just under 1000 feet elevation. At this height, the vineyard is almost continually cooled by Pacific currents moving inland through the Petaluma Gap. The soils are some of the most ancient soils in Sonoma County and have been leached of nutrients by wind and rain for aeons. It is a truly spectacular vista point but a challenging place to grow grapes.

### **ABOUT THE VINTAGE...**

Late spring rains helped the vines to bounce back from the stress of the previous year with healthy and vigorous growth, although yields remained on the low side of average. Steady temperatures promoted even development and led to an early harvest. The fruit was in the hopper long before the unseasonably early beginning of the autumn rains. All in all, the vintage provided superior structure coupled with piquant fruit flavors and lively aromas. Cool temperatures in the previous year contributed to lower than average yields. Conditions at this altitude lowered yields even more, creating a small harvest of Red Dog fruit.

### **ABOUT THE WINE...**

The grapes were destemmed into our one ton, open top fermenters and cold soaked for 4 days. We punched down by hand 4 times per day at the beginning of fermentation. This was decreased to 2 times per day by the end of fermentation. We inoculated with RC 212 yeast (a Burgundian isolate) and fermented warm, peaking about 94°, with additional maceration and skin contact. The wine was aged entirely in French barrels from the Tonnellerie Remond cooperage, and a majority of those barrels were new. The wine was raked once prior to bottling. Wine movements were made by pushing with inert gas all the way until bottling. 127 cases produced.

### **TASTING NOTES...**

This is a vineyard that has come to be well-known for its subtlety and for its delicate, floral, perfumed aromas. With this vintage, you can add to that description bold fruit and power. The nose opens to an exotic flush of roses, lilacs, holiday spices, dried mushrooms, along with ripe cherries and candied plum. The fruit expands in the glass to include fresh black cherry, cherry preserve, ripe plums, dried cranberries, and hints of geranium and pipe tobaccos. The palate is rich and concentrated, with the fruit flavors tending toward plum, black cherry, and pomegranate. Boysenberry and strawberry are hinted at as the acidity lifts the mid-palate. The palate fills with an earthen and tannic strength and the finish is long and dominated by fine, dry tannins and dried fruits. Age will continue to add softer notes of fresh mushrooms and tilled earth.