

 *Ancien Wines* 
2011 Carneros Pinot Noir



ABOUT THE VINEYARD...

Toyon Farm is located on a southwest-facing slope on the eastern (Napa) side of the Carneros. The top soil is a rich, dark clay that averages just around 24 inches in depth. These soils promote a dark, brooding fruit, emphasizing texture and tannin. We planted the first block of this vineyard in 1998 with cuttings originating from the Swan estate in the Russian River Valley--and these, in turn, were brought from Burgundy by Joseph Swan in the 1950's and '60's. A few years later, we planted a second block of Dijon 115 vines to balance the deepness of the Swan, emphasized in these soils, with some floral aromatics.

ABOUT THE VINTAGE...

2011 began cool, with later bud break. Flowering and fruit set was disrupted by heavy and uncharacteristically late rain storms. This limited fruit production considerably resulting in significantly lower yields, sometimes as low as half of typical production. The summer remained cool--one of the coolest on record--pushing the harvest date back further into September and yielding wines with a tremendous, bright acidity. In the end, vineyard management and assiduous farming practices helped to insure that this well-situated vineyard ripened properly, with rich, mouth-filling tannic structure.

ABOUT THE WINE...

We separated the entire lot into 1 ton, open-top fermenters, employing traditional punch-downs by hand in order to achieve optimal extraction. About 5% of the fruit was fermented as whole clusters. The wine was aged in an array of French cooperage, nearly half new, and gently racked once prior to bottling. Grapes, must, and wines were moved using gravity through to the barrel and using inert gas through racking and bottling. 296 cases produced.

TASTING NOTES...

The cooler vintage worked its magic, coaxing a lighter, floral touch from this typically masculine terroir. Rose and violet mix with strawberry, cranberry, and cherry. Ripe plum fills in along with the usual darker touches of graphite, cola, clove, and pepper. The palate is full of textural, mouth-coating tannins lightened with a bright acidity. Fresh cherries, raspberries, and plum dominate. The fruit moves towards a long, tannic finish with earthy spices and piquant minerality. This wine is perfect in its youthfulness. With the next few years it will broaden its palate and turn towards a darker, more earthy flavor.

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