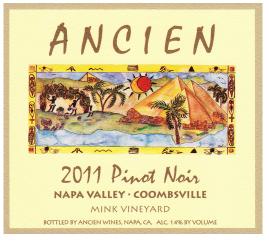
Ancien Wines 🖗 2011 Napa Valley Pinot Noir

MINK VINÉYARD



ABOUT THE VINEYARD...

The Mink Vineyard is located next door to the winery, in the Coombsville Viticultural Area in the southeastern corner of Napa Valley. Open to the same morning fogs and afternoon breezes that cool Carneros to the west, Coombsville is consistently one of the coolest pockets in Napa. Mink sits inside a small "bowl", allowing cooler air to settle during the evenings, and making Mink's mesoclimate a couple degrees cooler, even, than the surrounding hills. But the real secret to Mink's explosive flavors, smooth, mouth-coating minerality, comes from the soil. Underneath is a layer of compressed volcanic ash, called tufa. The tufa drains the top soils, storing moisture in rich clays underneath. The vines are able, with some work, to grow roots into the tufa layer, accessing moisture during the long, dry growing season. In a typical year, Mink can be practically dry-farmed.

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...

The grapes were destemmed into small, one-ton, open-top fermenters, with traditional hand punch downs, and aged the wine in Billon cooperage, a barrel that tends to sit subtly underneath the delicate fruit, lifting aromas without crowding them. The wines were 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. 130 cases produced.

TASTING NOTES...

This is a Pinot Noir that emphasizes elegance and grace, without sacrificing weight and profundity. A nose of blueberry, cherries, and huckleberry pie, floats atop dried currant notes, mushrooms, and wet stone. The palate reveals more stoniness rounded with plum, chocolate and currant, spiced with notes of pipe tobaccos. As always, the finish is dominated with the fine, chalky and mineral tannins coating the entire palate and lingering long into the finish. A singular California Pinot Noir. Drinks well now and is a Chef's boon companion. Will mature with grace for 8-12 years.

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