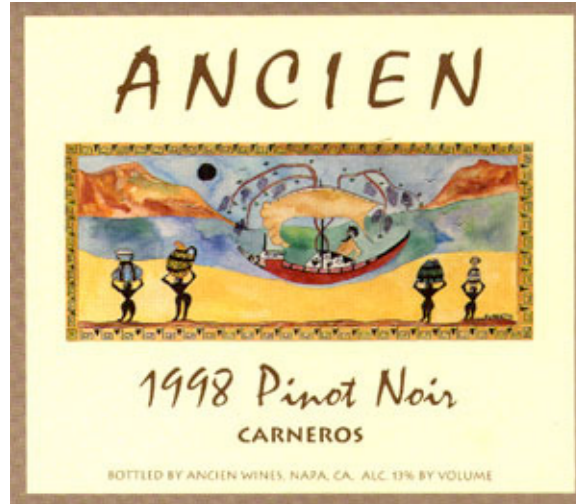


Ancien Wines

1998 Carneros Pinot Noir



ABOUT THE VINEYARD...

The 1998 vintage marks the first year we have blended another vineyard into our Carneros bottling. Through 1997, our sole grape source was from Domaine Chandon's 26 year old original Carneros planting. The grapes were selected from the lowest vigor area - a loamy/clay soil with thin, shallow soils located on a mild northeastern slope in Napa-Carneros. Its unique flavor profile continues to provide a strong and distinctive personality to our Carneros Pinot noir, and it remains the largest part of the blend. In 1998, we were fortunate to begin a relationship with Buena Vista Vineyards. This fruit comes from a 26 year old, loamy clay soil (sound familiar?!) about one mile from the Chandon vineyard. It too, sits on a hillside with both east and west exposures. The similarity of site, rootstock (both are St. George - 8X12 spacing), clone (old Martini selection), and vine age (both planted in 1973) provide great continuity.

ABOUT THE VINTAGE...

1998 was an very cool vintage. For a time it seemed as though we would never ripen the fruit. As we worried, the grapes responded by developing darker skin pigmentation, and more layered flavors. A warm end to September followed by a balmy October not only waylaid our concerns but made for a truly classic vintage. The cooler than average vintage ensured development of velvety, ripe tannins and bright, rich forward fruit.

ABOUT THE WINE...

The grapes were 100% destemmed into an open top fermenter 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. A small inoculum of "Assmannshausen" as well as RC212 (burgundy isolate) cultured yeasts carried out the fermentation. We employed a very warm fermentation, peaking at 94°F. The wine was gently pressed at dryness and went directly to barrel. The wine was aged entirely in French oak from the coopers Francois Freres and Billon - 35% new oak was used. The wine was raked once prior to bottling. Wine movements were made by pushing with inert gas all the way until bottling. Wine analysis: Alc. 13.6 %, pH 3.62, ta 6.3 g/l., r.s. 0.01 g/l. 800 cases produced.

TASTING NOTES...

Deep garnet color. Intense aromas of spice, coffee, cocoa/chocolate, rich blackberry and black cherry fruit with sl. earthy nuances. The palate is full and velvety in texture, bursting with blackberry/cherry fruit, anise, chocolate, and coffee. The finish is long and focused with lingering bright fruit and bright acidity. The wine has good tannic structure and will age nicely, unfolding additional layers with time. Drink or hold 6 - 9 years.

ANCIEN WINES, PO BOX 10667, NAPA CA 94581 · TEL(707)255-3908 · FAX (707)255-6104