

Ancien Wines

2003 Napa Valley Pinot Noir

MINK VINEYARD



ABOUT THE VINEYARD...

While California Pinot Noir producers have been looking (ourselves included) to new, exciting, emerging north coast regions where the grape excels, we have been aware of the potential in overlooked areas in our back yard. The Mink Vineyard is one such case. It is located in the Tulocay area due east of the city of Napa (also known as Coombsville). This is a cool area that enjoys a backdraft of air conditioning from the San Pablo Bay.

The soils are very special. The top three feet is a rocky alluvial soil, reddish beige in color with loads of cobblestones. Below the alluvial is a layer of white volcanic ash approximately two feet deep.. The roots work their way through the cobblestones down to the surface of the ash. The ash provides excellent drainage as it is physically similar to limestone in porosity but also has water-holding capacity which it meters back to the vines. The vines can be practically dry farmed, depending on the year, and develop a very nice steady state system that is hard to achieve with drip irrigation. The vineyard is split equally between Swan Selection and Dijon 115 clone of Pinot Noir.

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. We inoculated with RC 212 yeast (a Burgundian isolate) and fermented warm, peaking about 94°F. The wine was pressed at dryness. The wine was aged entirely in French barrels from the Billon and Cadus cooperages. The wine was racked once prior to bottling. Wine movements were made by pushing with inert gas all the way until bottling. Wine analysis: Alc. 14%, pH 3.69, ta 5.7 g/l. , r.s. 0.01 g/l. 96 cases produced.

TASTING NOTES...

Blackberry, cocoa, and plum, dominate the youthful aromas. On the palate the wine is loaded with black cherry/blackberry fruit, blackberry jam, dark chocolate, and tar. Deeply concentrated, full bodied, with excellent texture and firm underlying structure. The palate brims with mouth watering black fruits followed by clove, cinnamon, spice in the finish. This wine will continue to unfold for 5 - 7 years.

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