

Belle Glos

2016 DAIRYMAN PINOT NOIR RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY • SONOMA COUNTY

MY GOAL WITH EACH OF THE BELLE GLOS SINGLE-VINEYARD PINOT NOIRS IS TO EXPRESS THE UNIQUENESS OF EACH VINEYARD SITE AND CRAFT A GENUINE STYLE OF CALIFORNIA PINOT NOIR THAT IS LAYERED, COMPLEX, FRUIT-FORWARD AND RICH. OUR DAIRYMAN VINEYARD IN THE RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY ON THE SONOMA COAST IS THE MOST RECENT ADDITION TO OUR BELLE GLOS TRIO OF PINOT NOIRS. WE'VE FOUND THIS VINEYARD TO BE WELL SUITED TO PRODUCING A WINE WITH OUR SIGNATURE STYLE.



JOSEPH WAGNER, OWNER & WINEMAKER

THE VINEYARD

Once a dairy farm and pastureland, this vineyard has realized its greatest potential as a prime, virgin Pinot Noir vineyard. It was first planted in 2000 to a mix of Dijon clones 116, 667 and 777, all grafted on low-vigor rootstock 101-14. I have been working with this vineyard since 2003 and have always been impressed by the quality of the Pinot Noir it produces. Dairyman sits in the southern alluvial plains of the Russian River Valley near the ocean, a region where cooling fog comes in through the Petaluma Gap in the morning and once again in the evening. Afternoon breezes help to soften the effects of the warm sun. In Dairyman, each vine has been trained up on a vertical shoot position (VSP) trellis, which both limits the growth and opens up the typically congested fruit zone. The combination of low-vigor rootstock and alluvial soil stress the vines, while the cool, coastal climate creates a long growing season that brings about small, concentrated and flavorful berries.

THE 2016 GROWING SEASON

A very rainy January gave way to warm, dry weather in Sonoma County early in spring. February was particularly warm, prompting vine growth in March and rapid canopy development in April. By the time the weather cooled down in May, bloom was complete. While June was seasonally warm, cold weather predominated in July and August, causing the light crop to ripen more slowly than normal. This gentle ripening resulted in fruit with very good color and ideal acids. Harvest began two weeks earlier than normal.

WINEMAKING

We harvested early in the morning so the fruit would arrive at the winery while the grapes were still cool to preserve the vineyard-fresh flavors. After de-stemming but not crushing the berries, we cold-soaked the fruit for up to two weeks to soften the skins and allow for ideal extraction. During fermentation in a combination of closed and open-top stainless steel fermenters, we used both punch-downs and pump-overs to extract color and tannins, and also to control temperatures and maximize flavors. We barreled only the free-run, discarding the press, then aged the wine in 100% French oak (60% new, 40% seasoned) for up to nine months. After racking the wine once malolactic fermentation was complete, we racked it a second time before making the final blend.

TASTING NOTES

Dark ruby red in color with satisfying aromas of boysenberry, dark cherry and mulberry along with delicate hints of baking spices, dill, cola, nutmeg and vanilla. On the palate, bold flavors of cranberry, ripe plum, cherry and super-ripe strawberry are uplifted by gentle notes of cocoa powder and sweet fig for a generous and silky mouthfeel. This tremendously complex and broad-shouldered wine finishes with grace.



I named this wine in honor of my grandmother, Lorna Belle Glos Wagner, who inspired and guided me.

SOIL:
Wright loam

CLIMATE:
Cool fog, sunny

GROWING SEASON:
*(bloom to harvest)
May 19–Oct. 6, 2016*

AVERAGE HIGH TEMP:
75.7°F

ELEVATION:
75-85 ft.

RELEASE DATE:
October 2017