

Belle Glos

2016 LAS ALTURAS PINOT NOIR SANTA LUCIA HIGHLANDS • MONTEREY COUNTY

MY GOAL WITH EACH OF THE BELLE GLOS, SINGLE-VINEYARD PINOT NOIRS IS TO EXPRESS THE UNIQUENESS OF EACH VINEYARD AND CRAFT A GENUINE STYLE OF CALIFORNIA PINOT NOIR THAT IS LAYERED, COMPLEX, FRUIT-FORWARD AND RICH. OUR LAS ALTURAS VINEYARD IS AN IDEAL LOCATION FOR GROWING SUCH A ROBUST, OPULENT AND FULL-FLAVORED STYLE OF PINOT NOIR.



JOSEPH WAGNER, OWNER & WINEMAKER

THE VINEYARD

The Spanish term 'Las Alturas' means 'the heights', a fitting name for this vineyard located on one of the highest grape-growing benches in the Santa Lucia Highlands AVA. At this elevation, the sunny but very cool climate creates a wine bearing all the hallmarks of this coastal region: robust, expressive, full bodied and balanced by a firm acidity. Nestled between the Santa Lucia Mountains and the western side of Salinas Valley, Las Alturas benefits from early morning fog which rolls in most days from Monterey Bay then burns off within a few hours. Gusty winds funnel in from the bay throughout the afternoon, moderating the overall temperature and contributing to one of the longest growing seasons in California. The high winds also result in smaller berries with very thick skins, giving us more color concentration. Another attractive characteristic of this vineyard is the low-vigor, free-draining sub-soil made up of a calcareous base underneath a layer of sandy loam. This complements our farming techniques to further reduce our yields per vine and augment the fruit's intensity.

THE 2016 GROWING SEASON

After a winter that brought below-average amounts of rain, warm weather in February kickstarted the Monterey County growing season with early bud break. Sunny weather continued in March and April before a persistent marine layer in May cooled things down. Just when we were starting to get worried about the fruit maturing properly, June warmed back up and was followed by mild temperatures for the remainder of the season. The result was even ripening of a beautiful crop and a harvest that began two weeks earlier than the 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

Deep garnet in color with an aromatic medley of black cherry, marionberry, ripe plum and a hint of anise. Dark fruit on the palate with flavors of wild berries, caramelized oak and cacao nibs complemented by subtle notes of vanilla, cedar and a hint of lavender and forest floor. Rich and unrestrained, this wine's abundant fruit is beautifully balanced by firm acidity and layers of red and black fruit.



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

SOIL:

Gloria sandy loam

CLIMATE:

Cool, very sunny

GROWING SEASON:

*(bloom to harvest)
April 12–Oct. 10, 2016*

AVERAGE HIGH TEMP:

77.9°F

ELEVATION:

540-1,210 ft.

RELEASE DATE:

August 2017