

Belle Glos

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 up to 1,200 feet. 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 2019 GROWING SEASON

Winter was cold and wet, beginning with a series of cold winter storms in mid-January that finally tapered off in late March. This delayed the onset of bud break and early grapevine growth. The weather turned warm and sunny in April, which caused rapid grapevine growth that lasted into early May. Cold, wet weather returned in mid-May before transitioning into a mild, warm summer. Hot weather in August led to a completed veraison by the end of the month, and the marine layer allowed the grapes to ripen evenly and retain their natural acidity. We started harvesting the Pinot Noir grapes in early-September and completed harvest on the third week of September.

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 destemming (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 aged the wine in 100% French oak (60% new) for up to nine months. After the wine underwent malolactic fermentation, we racked it twice before making the final blend.

TASTING NOTES

2019 LAS ALTURAS PINOT NOIR

*Santa Lucia Highlands
Monterey County*

Scarlet red in color with an aromatic medley of gooseberry, raspberry, and cranberry with hints of ginger, black pepper, and shaved milk chocolate. Dark fruit on the palate with flavors of wild berries, milk chocolate, toffee, black cherry, and ground nutmeg. Rich and structured, this wine has beautiful acidity that lingers through to a long, mouthwatering finish.

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 in the Santa Lucia Highlands of Monterey County is well suited to producing a wine in our signature style.

JOSEPH WAGNER
OWNER &
WINEMAKER

