

# 2016 VINTAGE NOTES

BY WINEMAKER MATT COURTNEY

The winter of 2015/2016 saw the end of the drought in the North Coast. While we did not see the torrential rains which finally filled all of our reservoirs and topped up (and then some) our water tables until the following winter, we did finally get enough precipitation in the early months of 2016 to experience a somewhat dramatic return to normal conditions in the vineyard.

The wines from the 2016 vintage absolutely reflect this shift. While the 2015 Pinots are impressive in their depth of color, concentration, and power, the 2016s seem incredibly fresh and vibrant in comparison. In a way, more truly Pinot-like than the 2015s. The colors, while not as nearly-black as some of the 15s can be, are textbook bright ruby and garnet. The wines almost glow they are so vibrant.

That energy carries over into the flavors, textures, and aromas of the wines as well. Fresh and lifted are the words that come to mind throughout the line-up. The wines have wonderful energy, mouthwatering acidity, and should age quite gracefully.

This is a true Pinot-lover's vintage; and for a winemaker, a welcome return to classic Russian River Valley qualities of freshness and vibrancy in the wines.



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## 2016 RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY CHARDONNAY

The 2016 Russian River Valley Chardonnay is a blend of our four Russian River Valley Chardonnay vineyards: El Diablo Vineyard on Eastside Road, Banfield Vineyard on Martinelli Road, Ritchie Vineyard on Eastside Road, and our estate Chardonnay vineyard on our Westside Road property. The wine is made with a modest amount of new oak to allow the fruit to take center stage. These appellation wines always offer great insight into the region as a whole for the given vintage. In 2016, notes of ginger, ripe white peach, sweet cream, and white pepper greet the nose, while flavors of orchard fruit, quince, and asian pear ride on silky texture that builds in intensity for nearly half a minute.

Peak drinking window: 2019 through 2027



## 2016 BANFIELD VINEYARD CHARDONNAY,

The Chardonnay blocks in Banfield Vineyard are some of the coolest sites we work with. These forty-year-old vines, planted to the Old Wente selection of Chardonnay, reside in a protected pocket of the Russian River Valley that collects cool air in the mornings, and warms up slowly only when the morning sun peaks over the surrounding hills.

Aromas of lime zest, orange blossom, wet granite, panna cotta and grilled bread emanate from the glass. The wine has great texture, density and minerality with notes of Asian pear, lime curd, flint, and lemon butter that build in intensity through the mid-palate and carry the long finish.

Peak drinking window: 2019 through 2027



## 2016 RITCHIE VINEYARD CHARDONNAY



The 2016 Ritchie Vineyard Chardonnay showcases the quality of one of the Russian River Valley's Grand Cru vineyards. Made from a 40-year-old block of Old Wente selection Chardonnay, the wine displays aromas of melted rocks, candied lemon peel, orange zest, lemon oil, white flowers, and sweet cream. On the palate, the wine is ethereal and vibrant, with notes of white peach, lemon butter, and pear skin. This Chardonnay has incredible density and length, with layers of flavors unfolding on the palate for a full minute.

Peak drinking window: 2018 through 2028.

## 2016 U.V. EL DIABLO VINEYARD CHARDONNAY



The 2016 El Diablo Vineyard Chardonnay is made from grapes grown on the eastern banks of the Russian River by the esteemed vineyard manager, Ulises Valdez. Our two favorite selections of Chardonnay, "Montrachet" and "Old Wente", are planted in this vineyard and are blended together to create this wine. Notes of Meyer lemon, orchard fruit, burnt sugar, candied orange peel, mint, cut hay, and panna cotta marry with bright acidity and refreshing minerality.

Peak drinking window: 2019 through 2029



## 2016 RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY PINOT NOIR

As always, the 2016 Russian River Valley Pinot noir is a blend of barrels selected from all of our Russian River Valley appellation vineyards. The color moves from a beautiful saturated ruby at the center to an almost neon violet at the edges. Notes of lavender, raspberry reduction, pencil lead, wood smoke, and earth greet the nose. On the palate, the wine is lively with bright acid, wild strawberry, rhubarb, cola, and pomegranate components blending seamlessly.

Peak drinking window: 2019 through 2027



## 2016 SONOMA COAST PINOT NOIR

With an abundance of ripe red and blue fruit, the 2016 Sonoma Coast Pinot noir is open, accessible, and delicious. On the nose, notes of spiced plums, cola, dried flowers, and grilled meat add complexity to the core of crushed berries. On the palate, the wine is broad and rich with notes of rhubarb, and tart cherries rounding out the mid-palate. A modicum of toasted oak complements the dark-fruited core with lively mineral-laced tannins supporting a juicy, medium-length finish.

Peak drinking window: 2018 through 2026



## 2016 FERRINGTON VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

The 2016 Ferrington Pinot noir is distinctive expression of Anderson Valley Pinot noir that blends power and purity in the same glass. Explosive aromatics of crushed pomegranate seeds, dried lavender, plum, and graphite are hallmarks of Ferrington Vineyard and are present in abundance. The intensely floral nose is accompanied by flavors of bright red raspberry, black pepper, toasted herbs, and tart bing cherries. A tangy, persistent acid backbone blends with chewy tannins to give the wine a firm and energetic finish.

Peak drinking window: 2019 through 2029



## 2016 MONONI VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

Mononi Vineyard is a gently sloping three-acre parcel of Pinot noir planted in the heart of the Russian River Valley appellation. In 2016, this vineyard produced a classic Russian River Valley Pinot noir, dense with tart bing cherry, espresso, fresh raspberry, and minerals on the palate. The nose is at first brooding, with wood smoke and forrest floor notes, but opens up once exposed to air to reveal layers of crushed cherries, wild strawberries, cola, pine needle, and violets. With a gem-like, bright ruby appearance, the wine is lifted and light on the finish which lasts for nearly a full minute.

Peak drinking window: 2019 through 2029



## 2016 PERLI VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

The 2016 Perli Vineyard Pinot noir boasts an exotic nose of forrest floor, black plum, pine needle, and wild raspberry. Savory, mouth-filling tannins and tangy acidity typical of this remote site on the Mendocino coast provide ample structure for flavors of black currant, graphite, tangy cherry, red fruits, and asian spice. There is a coppery acidity and mineral-driven intensity on the palate which carries the minute-long finish.

Peak drinking window: 2019 through 2029



## 2016 TOBONI VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

The profile of the translucent, garnet-colored 2016 Toboni Vineyard Pinot noir is classic Russian River Valley. The nose is full of sweet spice, cola, and raspberry aromas. Notes of cocoa powder, fresh raspberries, and graphite come in waves as this layered and complex wine opens up in the glass. Aromas of raspberry coulis, turned earth, black tea, and violets begin to develop with exposure to air. The finish is long and persistent with mouth-watering acidity providing structure, freshness, and lift.

Peak drinking window: 2019 through 2027



## 2016 U.V. LUCKY WELL VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

Lucky Well Vineyard is perched at the very top of Stoetz Ridge, the land mass that divides the true Sonoma Coast from the Russian River Valley. As such, the wine made from this site always expresses qualities from both regions: the high-toned wild berry fruit and earthiness of the Coast, and the power, richness, and complexity of the Russian River Valley. A captivating nose of crushed rose petals, graham cracker, asian spice, and wild blackberries fills the glass. The palate is a fusion of salted caramel, black cherry, blueberry, and wild strawberry. The flavors expand on the palate and are carried by a firm, mineral-laden backbone for a minute or more.

Peak drinking window: 2019 through 2029



## 2016 HARPER'S REST ESTATE VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

The Harper's Rest Estate bottling always stands out as one of the flagship wines of our portfolio. The 2016 Harper's Rest Pinot Noir is no exception. With a vibrant, dark garnet color, and bouquet of spiced cherries, puréed blackberries, black tea, and toasted French oak, this estate wine is a classic example of Russian River Valley richness, density, and finesse.

Harper's Rest is a two acre block planted on an ancient, gravelly, alluvial deposit on our Westside Road estate. This soil imbues the wine with a power, minerality, and concentration that is unparalleled in our line-up. While the wine is delicious right out of the bottle, it improves with air releasing notes of black plum, cola, and huckleberry, complimented by a savory, bay leaf spice. Tangy acidity and chewy, mouth-filling tannins carry the intensity for a minute-long finish.

Peak drinking window: 2019 through 2029



## 2016 TWO BIRDS ESTATE VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

The saturated, deep ruby color of the 2016 Two Birds Pinot Noir is a signature of this block on our Westside Road estate. Planted in 2006 to three heritage selections of Pinot Noir - Pommard, Swan, and Vosne-Romanée - this site seems to produce more complex and complete wines with every passing year.

The nose is captivating, with an explosive core of red and blue fruits wrapped in a blanket of turned earth and warm spice notes. This is a wine that seems to reveal yet another layer, another nuance, with every passing minute. One minute, wild raspberries and ripe black cherries are complemented by damp forest floor and mushroom notes; the next, fish mint and crushed bay leaf appear. A wave of blue fruits is complemented and heightened by a subtle note of barrel char with some time in the glass. On the palate, a rich grippy expression of black plum, ripe raspberry, fleshy black cherries greets the taster. Tannins are present and provide structure, but are polished and never drying or astringent. Cool blue and red fruits are ever-present as the fingerprint of our Middle Reach property.

Peak drinking window: 2019 through 2029



## 2016 BANFIELD VINEYARD ZINFANDEL



The Banfield Vineyard Zinfandel is made from a small plot of ancient, dry farmed Zinfandel vines planted on a steep hillside in the Russian River Valley in 1880. In 2016, the wine from this incredible vineyard is a textbook example of Russian River Valley Zinfandel at its best: a seamless combination of explosive fruit, bright acidity, and silky tannins. Aromas of crushed blackberry, raspberry, and cherry are joined by notes of cinnamon stick, tar, black pepper, and dried roses. On the palate, the wine is dense but not heavy, clean and red-fruited, chewy and mouth-filling, with notes of wild strawberry, tart cherry, and dark chocolate persisting for a full minute.

Peak drinking window: 2018 through 2028

## 2016 FERRINGTON VINEYARD GEWÜRZTRAMINER



The 2016 Ferrington Vineyard Gewürztraminer opens with a nose of yellow stone fruit, white flowers, lychee, quince, spiced honey, and talcum. The wine is made in an almost totally dry style, yet there is ample richness on the palate which plays well with the herbal, stony/flinty character and pleasantly grippy finish.

Peak drinking window: 2017 through 2027

## 2016 VONARBURG VINEYARD RIESLING



Vonarburg Vineyard is a small vineyard outside of the village of Philo in the Anderson Valley, planted for us by the same team that farms our Ferrington Vineyard fruit.

This dry Riesling from the 2016 vintage has a pretty nose of spiced green apple, honey, cut hay, white pepper, and wet granite. On the palate, mouth-watering acidity carries flavors of candied lime peel and white melon through to a steely, mineral finish. The wine is dry and energetic with a subtle chalkiness, yet is not at all austere.

Peak drinking window: 2019 through 2029