

34°54'N



2005 CUYAMA RIVER PINOT NOIR, SANTA MARIA VALLEY

WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS

In a secluded canyon less than twenty miles from the Pacific Ocean, along the Santa Maria Bench, down a narrow cut framed by rocky cliffs, is our North Canyon Vineyard. It's a box canyon that runs north to south with the Cuyama River cutting through the middle dividing Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties. The surrounding hills rise to 1,000 feet, catching the cool ocean breezes in the afternoon. Pinot Noir of great character is possible here, where the growing season is mild and the soil is meager. The vineyard's soils are primarily clay loam and some shale, though each TAZ block varies, so that the vines have to struggle and fight to gain flavor. The reward from all of that is a soft, pretty Pinot Noir with brightness and character immediately recognizable as Santa Barbara.

The 2005 growing season was ideal. There were no heat spikes, and moderate temperatures allowed the fruit to remain on the vine until it achieved both flavor and sugar ripeness. The lots for this wine were fermented separately and aged for ten months in French oak barrels (36% new). To me, Cuyama River Pinot Noir is soft and feminine, a wine that I like to sip. I find that it has delicate floral aromas followed by layers of cinnamon, cherry and raspberry.

-- Natasha Boffman, Winemaker

TECHNICAL DATA

BLEND: 100% Pinot Noir
ALCOHOL: 14.3%
HARVEST BRIX: 25
HARVEST DATE: Sept. 1-6, 2005



120°26'W