

# NÉGOCIANT PINOT NOIR

A Vertical Tasting of the 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014 vintages



Join us for this unique opportunity to taste through four lovely vintages of this Pinot Noir crafted by renown winemaker Bob Pepi.

Sourced from the Anderson Valley in Northern California, these wines are a remarkable showing of terroir and the essence of Pinot Noir.

Individually, the wine retails \$49.99-\$54.99

Vertical Package Special Price:

**\$165** plus tax

} *\$150 for wine club members* {

Package includes 4 bottles (one of each vintage) and special invitation to a virtual live tasting

Sign-up period:

Now thru September 27<sup>th</sup>

Pick-up your wines:

starting October 1<sup>st</sup>

shipping options available; inquire about rates

Virtual Tasting **live** via Zoom:

Friday, October 9<sup>th</sup> @ 6pm PDT

We will taste and talk about each vintage.

Whether you open or cellar your bottles is up to you!

### Winemaker's History

In 1966, when the Pepi family purchased a ranch with vineyards in the Napa Valley, little did they realize that they were establishing a dynasty that is alive and well to this day. Robert Pepi headed the family then. As his son, Bob, grew up, they decided to make their own wine. So, in 1980, the Robert Pepi winery was born.

In the beginning, they were famous for Cabernet Sauvignon. You couldn't pick up a wine publication featuring Best Buys in wine without Robert Pepi's name being listed. They sold the winery in 2000 and Bob went on to form Eponymous Wines, maker of Negociant. Free to take his own path, Bob began experimenting with other grapes and other areas. Like most winemakers, eventually he discovered Pinot Noir and, also like most winemakers, it was love at first sip.

Napa's climate is not generally suitable for Pinot Noir, though there are a few exceptions. To the north, in Mendocino's Anderson Valley, it couldn't thrive better. And thrive it does. Proximity to the ocean provides the cool temperature needed for Pinot Noir amidst the perfect soil that holds remnants from sea matter deposited millions of years earlier. Bob and his friend Jeff Lenamon located a vineyard in here, which Bob had long thought of as one of the 2 best areas in California for making top quality Pinot Noirs.

### The Anderson Valley

Winegrowing came to Anderson Valley much as it did to the rest of California: brought by European immigrants following the 1849 Gold Rush. But the valley's ocean-cooled climate and geographic isolation made it a better home for sheep and orchards than wine grapes. That changed when roads and cars proliferated after World War II, enabling the back-to-the-land movement in the 1960s and 1970s. Foggy mornings and rainy autumns made it difficult to ripen the popular red wines of the time, so early commercial wineries leaned into Chardonnay, Gewürztraminer and Riesling. When Anderson Valley requested official recognition as an American Viticultural Area (AVA, or appellation) in 1982, these three grapes accounted for 400 of the 582 acres then planted. Pinot Noir's 47 acres were mostly in one vineyard.

The valley's winegrowing fate changed just a few years later. Pinot Noir had long been judged unsuitable to California: it ripened too much in warm interior valleys, and not enough in coastal appellations. Then French scientists unleashed a new wave of Pinot Noir clones that ripen reliably in cool climates, especially those with hot days and cold nights – just like Anderson Valley.

The 1980s were also the beginning of America's love affair with fine wine. The romance turned red during the 1990s, sparking massive plantings of red wine varieties throughout California. American Pinot Noir found ardent fans among connoisseurs of French Burgundy (which is just Pinot Noir with a geographic name). The new clones poured into Anderson Valley, pulling in grape buyers from other regions as well as new wine entrepreneurs and highly skilled, internationally-minded winemakers. Sparkling wine also arrived in force, giving the rustic valley a new sophistication.

With world-class fruit, facilities and winemaking all established in the new century, Anderson Valley rapidly rose to join California's other top wine Valleys. Yet it did so without losing its soul. The delicious white wines and historic heirloom Pinot Noir varieties are still here. Sheep and orchards still grace the landscape. Vineyards and wineries of all sizes nestle together, surrounded by redwood and oak trees. The hillsides still glow green and gold in the sun. Great wine is now as characteristic of Anderson Valley as the scent of the sea on foggy mornings.

## Tasting Notes

### **2014 – 13.8% ABV, acidity 5.71 g/L, residual sugar 0.33 g/L, pH 3.55**

Subtle aromas of black cherries, earthy-mushroom characters and hints of orange blossoms are evidenced in this intense, complex nose. The palate is elegant and balanced with wonderful integration of flavors from entry through the long pleasing finish.

Picked from 3 different vineyard blocks on the property (with 3 different exposures and soils) on the same day. Immediately after de-stemming, a signee of about 10% of the juice volume was done. Cold-soaked for 3 days, and then Assmanshausen yeast was added. Reached temperatures of 70-75° F early in the fermentation, and then pressed at dryness. Then placed in 30% new French Oak barrels 2 days after pressing, and oak-aged for 10 months.

### **2013 – 13.6% ABV, acidity 6.6 g/L, residual sugar 1.72 g/L, pH 3.47**

The bright aromas immediately please with both good intensity and complexity, hinting of red berry fruit, cherries, sage and clean earthiness. The flavors follow in this varietally-appropriate medium-bodied wine that has elegant balance and structure with wonderful integration of flavors from entry through the long, supple finish.

Picked from 3 different vineyard blocks on the same day. Immediately after de-stemming, a signee of about 10% of the juice volume was done. Cold-soaked for 3 days, and then Assmanshausen yeast was added. Reached temperatures of 70-75° F early in the fermentation, and then pressed at dryness. Then placed in 33% new French Oak barrels 2 days after pressing, and oak-aged for 10 months.

### **2012 – 13.6% ABV, acidity 5.9 g/L, pH 3.45**

The bright aromas immediately please with both good intensity and complexity, hinting of red berry fruit, cherries, sage and a clean earthiness. The flavors follow in this varietally-appropriate, medium-bodied wine that has elegant balance and structure, coupled with wonderful integration of flavors from entry through to the long, supple finish.

The 2012 harvest was marked by a long growing season, allowing for long hang time which, along with moderate heat, aided in even maturation. There was an absence of any cool, wet weather. This even, slow maturation produced balanced, morphologically ripe fruit at moderate sugar levels. After hand-harvesting, followed by a traditional fermentation period, the wines was aged for 10 months in French Oak (40% new).

### **2011 – 13.8% ABV, acidity 5.4 g/L, pH 3.51**

Subtle aromas of black cherries, earthy-mushroom characters and hints of orange blossoms are evidenced in this intense, complex nose. The palate is elegant and balanced with wonderful integration of flavors from entry through the long pleasing finish.

Picked from 3 different vineyard blocks on the property (with 3 different exposures and soils) on the same day. Immediately after de-stemming, a signee of about 10% of the juice volume was done. Cold-soaked for 3 days, and then Assmanshausen yeast was added. Reached temperatures of 70-75° F early in the fermentation, and then pressed at dryness. Then placed in 30% new French Oak barrels 2 days after pressing, and oak-aged for 10 months.