



L A T E S P R I N G 2 0 1 7 R E L E A S E

Dear Friends:

2015 CHARLES HEINTZ VINEYARD CHARDONNAY / WEST SONOMA COAST

Pale yellow-green. Nose is dominated by wet stone and menthol, with primary fruits deep in the background. **Rich and silky** in the mouth with enticing fruit sweetness but little obvious fruit to show for it. Shows very **noble minerality** with distinct iodine quality lingering in the nose. **Taut and savory with an energetic finish.**

You will want to **drink this now** and in 10 years. Classic Sonoma Coast Chardonnay. **Complete package.**

Our fifth bottling of this vineyard could not be more compelling. 2015 delivered the perfect combination of sunshine and coastal fog penetration resulting in a long cool growing season. Almost no botrytis was seen in the vineyard allowing a more direct expression of site over other years. The Gold ridge sandy loam held onto winter rains and delivered measured nourishment to the now 37-year-old vines.

2015 ELLIOTT VINEYARD PINOT NOIR / WEST SONOMA COAST / 75% WHOLE CLUSTER

Deep crimson. Very dark due to low yields (0.75 tons/acre or <15 hL/HA), liqueur-like nose hints at **candied white flowers**, sandalwood, mulch and minerals. Thick, plush and deep, delivering great depth of texture indicative of the year. **Exotic spice** and earth tones emerge with flavors of red mulberries, **rose petals** and petrol with plush, broad tannins totally coated by fruit, this tactile wine is hard to scrape off the palate. Brings tons of mineral and floral notes and definition.

Drink one now to get a sense of the wine. **Put these away for a few years** to let the wine harmonize.

Our work in the vineyard at Elliott continues to allow the resulting wines to show how special this place is. Schist soils are peppered with quartz veins pushing up through the top soil. Gently west-southwest facing slopes allow for good drainage and drive the now 36-year-old vines to search for water. The Mt Eden clone is shy to bear fruit but what fruit makes it to our winery could not be more exciting. Taught, hard berries full of juicy red fruits and mouth watering acidity delivery a wine that is hard to not like.

2015 PORTER-BASS VINEYARD PINOT NOIR / WEST SONOMA COAST / 60% WHOLE CLUSTER

Dark crimson red. Aromas of **dark cherry, black raspberry**, crushed stone and cinnamon convey an initial sexy carnal quality to the wine. **Velvety and broad** but also **light on it's feet**; more about the deep red fruits and inner-mouth youthful perfume than earth tones – these will come later with bottle age. Perhaps a bit youthful clenched but **substantial tannins are ripe** and harmonious and continuous throughout the wine. This is a **classic wine**.

Our best wine to date from this site.

Being a little further away from the coast can have its advantages in years like 2015. Shatter affected us to a lesser degree at Porter-Bass than other coastal sites. Yields were normal and we saw slow flavor and physiological development in the two blocks we work with. The combination of shale and sandstone produces a wine of great depth and earth tones. A mixture of Swan, Calera and suitcase selection lends itself to complexity and variations on terroir transmission.

2015 “COSTALINA” PINOT NOIR / WEST SONOMA COAST / 15% WHOLE CLUSTER

Medium red. **High-pitched perfume** of crushed raspberry, red cherry and blood orange. Boasts compelling richness and depth of fruit. A wine of **great sweetness right now and early balance**, this spectacular rendition maintains outstanding fullness and breadth through a rising finish. Noble tannins, **savory minerality** and **astonishing lightness** of being, this is the **essence of Pinot Noir**.

Buy by the case. Hold for now. Or decant for 3-4 hours before serving.

Offers up the kaleidoscope of flavors that can be found in the West Sonoma Coast. We source grapes for this wine from a vineyard outside of Occidental and add small amounts of each of our vineyard designate sites (Porter-Bass, Hellenthal and Elliott) to round out the wine and convey the best of the coast. Made for earlier enjoyment than our other wines. Pop a cork on this soon after you receive the wine.

2015 / VINTAGE SUMMARY

After three consecutive vintages framed by drought and healthy crops, we were reminded that not all growing seasons are alike. If 2012-2014 were defined by drought, 2015 will be remembered for the prolonged foggy spring which caused the greatest level of shatter since 2005. Shatter is the incomplete fertilization of the flowering bodies on each cluster. Shatter can be caused by three main mechanisms: rain, wind and fog. Of the three, fog is the worst. The spring of 2015 saw warm inland temperatures which pulled our coastal fog deep into Sonoma County and other parts of the state. Regions that typically are unaffected by shatter saw steep declines in production levels. The cool wet weather resulted in 25-60% of crop loss in our vineyards.

What this means for the wines is that while there is less to go around, we have deeply concentrated wines with fresh acidity and chewy qualities. The whites are powerful, deep and are immediately enjoyable but also should reward those who decide to put them away. The reds are dark, rich (by our standards) and full of flavor but have fine grained tannins and amazing acidity. Suffice it to say, we like these wines and they remind us of our 2008's.

This will be your only opportunity to purchase the wines. Allocations are tighter than normal but rest assured not all vintages are like 2015. We are thankful for your continued support of our family winery. Be well.

John and Phoebe Raytek