

Ceritas

2024

Easygoing, easy to love

2024 began with some of the heaviest rains in recent memory. Over 40" of rain fell in Sonoma County during the first two months—about 25% above our historical average.

Soils were heavily saturated, creating ideal conditions for new growth. As a result, budbreak and early shoot development were consistent and even across the Sonoma Coast and Santa Cruz Mountains.

Spring flowering brought nearly perfect weather—mild, gentle warmth without adverse events. Vines showed early signs of a strong, above-average crop.

Up until this point, 2024 showed significant parallels to 2023, with canopies sky-high and fruit set looking nearly flawless. However, in July 2024, temperatures in the interior of Sonoma County began to diverge from 2023, with occasional record highs.

Fortunately, our vines' proximity to the ocean moderated the heat, preventing any significant sunburn. Earlier-picked sites began veraison near the end of July.

Following July's significant heat spikes, a warm but mild August allowed sugar accumulation and ripeness to progress at a steady, consistent rate.

Harvest commenced in the early morning hours of August 22nd at Bell Summe, followed by our other two sites on the interior of the Sonoma Coast the following week. As is typical, our peak harvest occurred in the first 10 days of September, with well over half of our grapes arriving during that time frame.

Early signs were auspicious: little cluster damage, flavorful, turgid berries, and slightly higher-than-typical yields overall.

Our season ended earlier than usual, under a new moon in the sandy soils of Trout Gulch on October 2nd.

When discussing 2024 with our team to write this newsletter, one thing kept coming up - normalcy. In stark contrast to 2022 and 2023, nearly all of our vineyards were picked right at their historical average dates.

Clarke (Mendocino) and Garden Creek (Alexander Valley) each saw their inaugural Ceritas vintage in 2024. These sites represent new regions, new varietals, and new opportunities to grow and further develop our farming and winemaking. We cannot wait for you to try them.

In summation, the 2024s epitomize balance. They lack any rough edges - acid, fruit, and tannin all seem to be in complete harmony. They are wines that deliver great pleasure in their youth, but have the concentration to go the distance. They are a spectacular set of wines that faithfully represent the character of the land from which they come.

Harvest Dates:

Bell Summe	August 22nd
TBH	August 28th
O'Connell	August 28th
Clarke	September 2nd
Charles Heintz	September 3rd
Hellenthal	September 4th
Elliott	September 4th
Peter Martin Ray	September 7th
Mt. Pajaro	September 8th
Red Car Estate	September 17th
Zephyr	September 17th
Garden Creek	September 24th
Trout Gulch	October 2nd

2024 TROUT GULCH CHARDONNAY / SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS

Gold in the Gulch.

Trout Gulch represents the bleeding edge of viticulture in California - any colder, and grapes could not ripen. This 1980 planting of Wente clone Chardonnay is planted on a bed of nearly pure sand, unique in our portfolio. Always picked at the end of the season, the acidity achieved from this red-wood-lined hillside is nearly unbelievable. Our gratitude goes to the Alfaro family for coaxing magic out of this challenging terroir year after year.

2024 Tasting Note:

Our tenth vintage from this landmark vineyard. For many years, Trout Gulch has defined what makes Santa Cruz Mountains Chardonnay so special, and the 2024 is no exception. Salt, lemon oil, yuzu, and lime swirl in a wine with a mouthwatering, piercing level of acidity. The phenolic tension is unbelievable. To put it simply, this wine could not come from anywhere else. Outrageously good. (2027 - 2040)

2024 TBH CHARDONNAY / SONOMA COAST

The Whole Truth.

Paul and Kathryn Sloan, early advocates of high-density viticulture in California, planted a four-acre parcel of Chardonnay around their home in 2009, naming the site **TBH**. The Barlow Homestead sits in the coldest part of the Green Valley on just two feet of prized Goldridge soil. We source a few small rows of mineral-drenched Wente Clone Chardonnay here, proudly being the only winery, aside from Small Vines, that has access to this fruit.

2024 Tasting Note:

This is our third vintage with the site, and it is firing on all cylinders in 2024. Often compared to Trout Gulch, but the fruit profile comes across with more depth and saturation on the nose and tongue. There is a level of intensity to the palate that would seem impossible at such a cold, nutrient-deficient site. Production here will always be tiny, so take care not to miss this. (Now - 2038)

2024 CUVÉE ANNABELLE PINOT NOIR / WEST SONOMA COAST

Anna-thing But Ordinary

In stark contrast to her sister's wine, **Cuvée Annabelle** hails from the far northwestern reaches of the West Sonoma Coast, focused on the Fort Ross-Seaview AVA. This is stark, rugged land - barely developed and sparsely populated. These rocky soils yield a Pinot Noir of structure, longevity, and incredible depth. Terroir like this is found nowhere else in the world.

2024 Tasting Note:

An archetypal example of West Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir. Darkly red-fruited on the nose, lifted by savory components of black tea and flowers. There is an attractively linear character to the palate, with a muscular structure perfectly balanced with riveting freshness. Brooding red fruits abound. Perhaps more than any of our Pinot Noirs, this will reward a long nap in a cool cellar. (2027 - 2040)

2024 ELLIOTT PINOT NOIR / WEST SONOMA COAST

Essentially Elliott.

Planted shortly after the neighboring Old Shop Block, **Elliott** straddles a small ridgeline of parent rock that offers two distinct exposures within the small field. The site is proudly stewarded by the same Hellenthal family that planted the block decades ago at the very end of famed Bohan-Dillon Road. In such a lightly planted AVA, Pinot Noir with this level of vine age is nearly impossible to find.

2024 Tasting Note:

Elliott put forth a tough act to follow in 2023. The 2024 certainly lives up to it, but presents in a very different way. The 2024 is darker, more intense. Crushed mixed berries, gravelly earth, and wild herbs compose an intoxicating nose, with waves of perfectly ripe red fruit coming in on the palate. A slightly softer tannin profile will lend itself to earlier drinking. Delicious. (Now - 2038)