



# DUMOL

*Cultivating an Estate: One of the greatest privileges of a winemaker is to plant a piece of land.*

Around our eighth year of making wines, we realized that to truly be a world-class wine producer we needed an estate property – an exceptional vineyard of our own that would bring gravitas and longevity to our winery. With extensive searching, in early 2004, we discovered a beautiful set of ridge top east-facing plateaus in the Green Valley area of the Russian River Valley – west of Highway 116 about 10 miles from the Pacific. What I loved about the land wasn't only its ideal sun exposure and cooling from afternoon breezes and proximity to fog coming up from the south<sup>i</sup>. It was the site's incredibly diverse soils – three signature soil types: Classic Goldridge sandy clay loam on the top plateau; very sandy, shallow soils with sandstone bedrock very close to the surface in the middle section; and iron-rich Altamont soil in the lower section. This was a unique parcel of land that we needed to develop in a very meaningful way. We divided these three soil types into four distinct parcels: Coffee Lane Estate, Kearney Estate, O'Connell Estate, and Marshall Estate.

We set about planting the vineyard in a manner that would allow us to really drill down into the site itself – really capitalize on these very distinctive soil compositions, each incredibly influential on the character of the fruit we were to grow<sup>ii</sup>. We chose to plant our favorite field clone selections<sup>iii</sup> along European vine density perimeters. Instead of the typical 1,200 vines per acre planted in Northern California, we planted an extremely high density 3,630 vines per acre – perhaps the highest density site on the north coast. Farming such a high-density vineyard is incredibly labor intensive but yields exceptional fruit.

We had a vision for the finished wines as we planted the vineyard<sup>iv</sup>. It is imperative to develop a vineyard with a style in mind. This particular method of high-density planting forces the vines to delve deep into the soils. This keeps the vines very small and each vine produces a small number of clusters with small, very concentrated berries. Each vine focuses its energy on producing very intense flavors with nuance and detail, power and richness, depth balanced with a fresh, vibrant fruit character.

We've worked with our estate for more than 14 years now and have seen the vines settle into a beautiful equilibrium with the land. The wines have become more complex, harmonious and complete over time. Our continual evolution is a combination of the vines' coming of age and the winemaker intimately knowing the land over time, understanding how the vines will respond season to season.

— Andy Smith, Winemaker, Viticulturist & Partner

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i. High coastal mountains sit to the west of Green Valley so most of its cooling influence – afternoon breeze and the fog that follows — comes up from the south. Blowing in through the Petaluma Gap, it funnels north to Green Valley and saturates the area throughout the night, burning off between 9 and 11 am.

ii. The underlying core essence of our estate vineyard is very much soil driven. The climate, fluctuating year to year, creates various intensities in the grapes year to year, but the underlying signature of the vineyard persists while nuances of the season reflect in the fruit –more acidity or darker fruit, more texture or lighter body. As an annual, vintage product, flavor details will vary but underlying core essence and quality of the wine remains consistent every year.

iii. I'm a big believer that the specific plant material you use in the vineyard has a very strong influence on the final character of the wine. There are many different options for planting Pinot Noir as it's a genetically unstable, very adaptable grape variety. Field selections such as Calera, Swan, Mt Eden do not come from a single mother vine. Instead, they hail from a sampling of vines within a given plot of land so they have an inherent diversity. Ultimately, that means the final wine possesses an inherent diversity—diversity of flavor, aroma, texture and structure. We like to use three or four of these field selections and build the flavor of the wine in the vineyard. The way each selection interacts with the soil and the climate drives the complexity of the wine.

iv. It's vital for a winemaker to have a very specific vision of the wine they're trying to produce. Our approach is both systematic and natural as we try to minimize our footprint in the field. We treat the grapes in a consistent way to showcase the inherent personality of each vineyard and each vineyard's clonal selection, always working to draw out the specific character traits each vineyard naturally produces.

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