



Freestone

2006 Freestone Pinot Noir

Winemaking Data

Harvest dates: Sept. 28th – Oct. 19th 2006.

Blend & grape sources: 100% Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir from estate vineyards: Freestone and Quarter Moon.

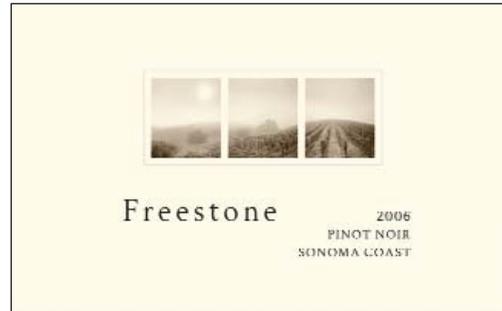
Clones/Selections: Freestone field selection is a mixture of several Dijon clones and several heirloom selections.

Aging regime: 15 months in 55% new and 45% two to three year-old French oak barrels.

Coopers: Francois Frères, Remond, Rousseau and Ermitage.

Winemaker's Notes

The long growing season in 2006 provided the winery with Pinot Noir grapes that were in nearly immaculate condition, with crunchy skins, lots of perfume and excellent tannin development. The winemaking team took every opportunity to utilize these beautiful grapes most effectively. We maximized the use of whole berries in each tank and also experimented with some whole cluster additions to the fermentations. Both of these techniques add to the silky texture and accentuate the spicy characteristics that are native to the cool Freestone region. This Pinot Noir is a selection of the best wines produced during the 2006 harvest. We selected the groups with the best balance of tannin, flavor concentration, aroma and acidity. The resulting blend offers hints of sandalwood, wild blackberry and balsamic reduction, dried tea leaves, and a mélange of Indian spices. This wine is serious, yet restrained, and has a backbone of natural acidity, tannin and minerality to provide the structure necessary for aging.



The Growing Season

The cool, late ripening growing season of 2006 finished persuasively with near perfect maturity levels. This came as a huge relief as the Sonoma Coast received over nine feet of rain! The wet soil conditions slowed initial vine growth but had less impact on fruit set, which occurred in early June. Following a brief heat spell at the end of July – our first real and much needed heat of the season – veraison began; further crop reduction in the form of green harvesting helped mitigate the late start and long-range weather concerns. This maneuver proved critical as August and September temperatures were significantly below normal.

Although slight rainfall occurred on the 4th and 5th of October, it was with great relief that warm, dry and windy conditions materialized for the balance of the month, bringing the fruit to favorable maturity. The long, cool growing season provided higher acid content, thicker skins, more fragrance and flavor, and exceptional varietal transparency.