



Freestone

2008 Freestone Pinot Noir Quarter Moon Vineyard

Winemaking Data

Harvest dates: Sept. 10, 2008.

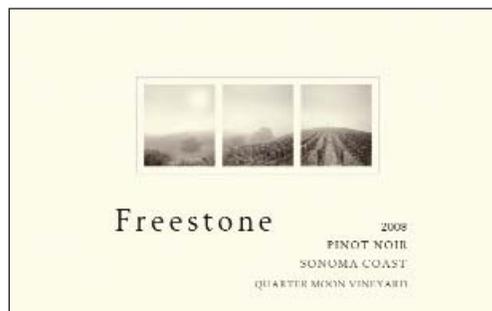
Blend & grape sources: 100% estate-grown Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir from Quarter Moon Vineyard.

Aging regime: 16 months in French Oak barrels (80% new and 20% two- to three-year-old) before bottling in March, 2010.

Winemaker's Notes

This very small production of the best Pinot Noir from our western-most property is a beautiful expression of Freestone terroir in the bottle. The grapes that went into this wine were hand harvested, like all of our grapes, and then partially de-stemmed by hand in order to achieve the perfect harmony of earth, spice, lively acidity and firm yet silky tannins. The nose is cool, deep, and exotic, exuding aromas of cinnamon, clove, dried rose hips, cedar, and freshly gathered wild mushrooms.

This is a Pinot that is at once both elegant and striking, boasting a mouthful of red currants, wild strawberries and rhubarb, and finishing with a fresh and zesty mouth feel. This wine drinks surprisingly well now but will improve significantly over time as the fine tannins and backbone of acidity find harmony in aging.



The Growing Season

The 2008 vintage was a dry year overall and continued the streak of above-normal temperatures and below normal precipitation. Despite the dry conditions, there was good berry set in both Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, producing a substantial crop of balanced and flavorful fruit.

Because of severe frost in late March/early April, Freestone lost ~50% of estate Chardonnay. On the other hand, because of close proximity to the coast, it was unaffected by the major fires that broke out during the peak growing season, so all the wines are fresh, lively and free of any signs of smoke taint. The early part of the growing season was warm and steady, allowing for fairly even ripening in both varieties.

Beginning on September 1st a strong heat wave came through and began to dehydrate the delicate Pinot Noir grapes. Though the Chardonnay held up well under this pressure, the biggest challenge of the vintage was to harvest all of the most susceptible Pinot Noir blocks before temperatures soared above 100°F; therefore, the focus was on Pinot Noir, with all fruit harvested between September 3rd and September 27th. The Chardonnay harvest began with the warmer Russian River Bacigalupi vineyard on September 2nd, followed by Dutton Ranch on September 10th. The bulk of estate Chardonnay came in slowly between September 11th and October 1st.

Though the latter part of the growing season was unusually warm, the wines are quite vibrant, balanced and aromatic, and are a great follow-up to the highly successful 2007 vintage.