

2001 Pinot Noir

Sonoma Valley

The Vintage: 2001 was a superb vintage, continuing the pattern of odd years surpassing the even years. Several natural cycles influence the quality of a vintage. There is the 2-year growth cycle of vines, the 7-year El Nino cycle, and a recently discovered 25-year oceanic. The interplay of these cycles influences long-term fluctuations in the life of the vine and quality of its fruit. The 2001 vintage was on the positive side of this interaction, producing a long and mild growing season, good balance in the vines and strong varietal flavors in the fruit. Pinot Noir in particular can suffer from late season heat spikes, which are common in California, and 2001 had none of these.

The Wine: The Sonoma Valley appellation is a diverse growing region with numerous microclimates and soil types. Our 2001 Sonoma Valley Pinot Noir is a cuvee from two small three-acre vineyards at the foot of Sonoma Mountain. The Ashton Vineyard in Glen Ellen provides a strong backbone and structure. The Elizabeth Laurent Vineyard in Bennett Valley adds delicate floral qualities so admired in the best Pinots. The character formed by the terrior of each vineyard is embellished by the application of dedicated winemaking techniques such as whole berry fermentation, individual selection of yeast strains, hand cap punching, and gravity transfer. French oak barrels, from especially selected Burgundian coopers, were used for 18 months of barrel aging.

Tasting Notes: Our 2001 Sonoma Valley Pinot Noir is the most masculine of our three Pinots, with a broad shouldered structure of fruit, spice, and subtle wood notes in the middle of the palate. While it has more tannin than the Carneros or Russian River Pinots these tannins are well integrated with balanced acidity, a full and round mouth feel and a long finish. The complexities derived from the blend play on the palate with layers of intertwined flavors. This wine is delicate enough to pair with poached salmon and full enough to enjoy with the cheese course.

Harvest & Winemaking Data:

Vinyards: Ashton Vineyard = A, Elizabeth Laurent Vineyard = E

Winemakers:	Robert Rex & Michael Browne	
Harvested by hand:	A – Sept. 5, 2001,	E – Sept. 14, 2001
Brix at Harvest:	A – 28.3°	E – 23.5°
Acid at Harvest:	A – 4.41g/L (1g added)	E – 6.1g/L
pH:	A – 3.41	E – 3.34
Yeast:	separate lots using RC212, Assmenshausen and one on native yeast	
Cold soaked:	0 to 4 days	
Fermentation:	A – 17 days	E – 10 days
Max. Ferm. Temp:	A – 96°F	E – 84°F
M-L Conversion:	100% in barrel	
Aging:	18 months in Burgundian French oak, 35% new	
Fining & filtration:	none (bug screen at bottling)	
SO2 at Bottling:	18 ppm free	
Bottled:	290 cases – May 12, 2003	
Alcohol:	13.5 %	
Released:	October 1, 2003	
Awards & Reviews:	Not yet submitted for review.	



