



## Sea Smoke Vineyard and Viticultural Profile

Sea Smoke's special vineyard site with its high altitude, southern exposure, rich clay soils, low crop yields and the unique microclimate of the Santa Ynez River canyon, possesses the ideal conditions for growing premium Pinot Noir.

Located in the Santa Rita Hills appellation of Santa Barbara County, our vineyard site is unique because it falls in one of the only east-west coastal ranges in the United States. The coastal ranges of the western hemisphere generally run north to south, keeping the cool marine fog layer over the Pacific Ocean from reaching the warm interior valleys. However, on occasion, California's coastal range is dramatically interrupted by geographic features that allow this marine fog layer to wash over ideally situated vineyard land. One such interruption of the coastal range is the Santa Ynez River canyon, which borders the Santa Ynez Mountains and winds its way westward, eventually spilling into the Pacific Ocean. Flanked to the north by the Santa Rita hills, and to the south by the Santa Rosa hills and Santa Ynez range, this canyon acts as a funnel, drawing a layer of marine fog over some of the best Pinot Noir land in the world.

Our estate vineyard is planted on south-facing hillside bluffs, with elevations ranging from 350 to 650 feet, and thus benefits from excellent daylong sun exposure – a crucial factor in optimum flavor and tannin development. Moderating this natural abundance of sunshine, the afternoon's marine fog layer is funneled in from the coast through the Santa Ynez River canyon, cooling the vineyard and resulting in a longer ripening period. This extended hangtime allows the flavors and tannins of Pinot Noir to fully develop prior to harvest.

Sea Smoke's vineyard blocks are located in hillside "buckle" zones. These sloping "buckle" zones are characterized by soils deposited over time by the erosion and weathering of the nearby peaks. In these unique areas, rich Gazos, Lopez and Botella clay soils remain shallow, an essential quality for reducing vigor and creating smaller clusters of grapes with higher intensity of flavor.

To achieve a broad palette of flavors for blending in the winery, we have planted 10 top-quality, low vigor French clones – including: 777, 667, 2a, 115, 113, 828, 05, 459, 09 and 16. We achieve partial vigor reduction naturally from the shallow clay soils on our hillsides (some of which have 30 percent slopes). Additional vigor reduction is achieved by using carefully selected rootstocks.

While we employ the latest technology in the vineyard to help us achieve vine balance and vigor reduction, we also recognize that technology is no replacement for skilled people. Every one of our vines receives personal handling from our vineyard crew seven to eight times each year.

We meticulously farm and manage our vineyard, striving for low crop yields and vine balance. Specifically, we work to identify variability within vineyard blocks and then modify our farming practices accordingly. Because people recognize block-to-block and plant-to-plant variability more easily than machines do, our highly trained team is our biggest asset in our quest for quality. The hand operations which our vineyard team performs, on *each vine, every year* include: suckering and shoot thinning, basal leaf removal, cluster thinning (post fruit set), vertical shoot positioning (two to three times), green drop (the elimination of clusters with 50 percent or more green berries at 80 percent veraison) and wing/shoulder removal on remaining clusters, additional pre-harvest green drop, and harvesting by block and by clone.

Managed deficit irrigation - employing a pressure bomb to measure water stress - is used to keep vine vigor low, berry size small and quality at a maximum. Or simply put, we give each block just the right amount of water (via our drip irrigation system) to achieve the desired vine water stress. Harvest is also tailored to the needs of the vineyard, and we usually pick the east and west-sides of each vine row separately.

In 2003, we began participating in the California Association of Winegrape Growers' Code of Sustainable Winegrowing Practices - a self-assessment program, which sets targets and monitors the achievement of our sustainable farming goals. Two years later, we started cultivating a special 12-acre block of our vineyard using biodynamic practices. While we admit that certain aspects of biodynamic farming can appear a little odd, we love the results. We also think that nurturing the soil and vines, without harsh chemicals, is simply the right thing to do for the land, our team and our customers. Since 2013, 100% of our vineyard has been farmed biodynamically.

We believe that Sea Smoke's unique combination of sun, fog, soil and meticulous farming results in wines that are lush, elegant and expressive.