



ampelos cellars

2016 sta. rita hills “rho” pinot noir (selected barrels)

certified sustainability in practice, organic, and biodynamic



harvest

- early morning grape harvest started on september 9 with clone 667 and wrapped up on september 19 with clone 828 – a relatively late beginning but the grapes came in fast
- as it is our style, the grapes were hand picked and hand sorted in the vineyard using our portable sorting table
- nature was generous and the yields were at a nice level – average a little over three ton per acre. But as the grapes arrived at the winery we noticed good colors, acids and flavor concentration
- the brix ranged between 23.1 and 25.8 with well balanced pH and acids

wine making style

- after we harvested the fruit, it stayed 24 hours in our cold room to avoid the use of dry ice
- the fruit was gently destemmed and cold soaked for 3-5 days until the fermentation started. we always taste the stems as we run the clusters through the destemmer and for this vintage we noticed that several clones were suited for stem inclusion during fermentation. for our 2016 “rho” we included one barrel of clone 115, one clone 2a and one clone 667 fermented with stem inclusion
- we did more experimentation with cofermentation of clones in 2016 and this blend includes 3 barrels of 828+2a, one barrel of 115+Pommard, one barrel of 459+667 and one 115+667cofermented
- the wild yeast does its job for primary fermentation – we have not added cultured yeast since 2010
- we hand punched each fermenter twice a day to enhance the extraction of colors, tannins and flavors
- after a completed primary fermentation we let the fermenters continue with extended maceration between 7 and 23 days to reach the optimal tannin balance. we then separated the free run and pressed the rest – for the “rho” we use all free run wine. the individual batches were barreled down after a day of settling
- after two and a half years of barrel ageing Rebecca, Jesse and Peter tasted through all the 2016 barrels and selected our favorite 11 barrels – blind tasting! the barrels we selected ended up representing all our 7 different clones
- it was barrel aged for 33 months and only racked once for final integration five months before bottling. it is unfined and unfiltered – as all our red wines are

character

- deep, dark garnet red with a nice brick hue
- lots of dominating red fruit – ripe bing cherries, sweet strawberry and a little cranberry combined with complex spices from the 667 and 828 integrated with silk from pommard - balanced with soft skin and oak tannins
- long lingering smooth finish with the fruit supported by the characteristic sta. rita hills cherry cola
- overall this is a wine that draws you towards burgundy with its balanced layers and complexity

appellation

ampelos vineyard, sta. rita hills

composition

estate pinot noir: 30% clone 2a, 20% 828, 18% 667, 17% 115, 5% pommard, 5% 777, and 4% 459. 10% stem inclusion

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vineyard source	ampelos vineyard – first in US to be certified sustainability in practice, organic and biodynamic
alcohol	14.2%
pH/acid	3.68/6.12
barrel aging	33 months
oak profile	40% new french oak from our favorite producers - 60% neutral oak