



ampelos cellars



2015 sta. rita hills “rho” pinot noir (selected barrels)

1st in the US to be certified sustainable, organic & biodynamic

harvest

- early morning grape harvest started on August 21 (the day after Peters birthday!) with clone 115 and wrapped up on september 12 with clone 777 – another long harvest spread and the earliest we have ever picked pinot
- yields came in as the lowest ever with an average of 1.37 ton per acre – as low as 0.68 tpa for clone 459 (first time we picked it). but we immediately noticed a nice concentration!
- as it is our style, the grapes were hand picked and hand sorted in the vineyard using our portable sorting table
- the brix ranged between 23.9 and 25.4 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 the 2015 vintage we noticed that several clones were suited for stem inclusion during fermentation. for this “rho” blend we included barrels from two different clones fermented with stems (2a and 667)
- in 2015 we did more experimentation with cofermentation of clones and this blend represents 2 barrels of 777/828 and one barrel of 828/pom cofermentations
- we let the wild yeast do 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 completed primary fermentation we let the fermenters continue with extended maceration up to one month, 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 years of barrel ageing we tasted through all 2014 barrels and selected our favorite 12 barrels – blind tasting! the barrels we selected ended up representing all our 7 different clones – including 459 that was picked for the first time. soo interesting how our pallets drives this in different directions each year! but always with the highest quality as the main focus
- it was barrel aged for 33 months and only racked once to facilitate a final integration five months before bottling. it is unfinned and unfiltered – as all our red wines are

character

- deep, dark garnet red – sorry but you can’t read the WSJ though this one...
- lots of dominating red fruit – raspberry, black cherry, sweet strawberry – 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

appellation	ampelos vineyard, sta. rita hills
composition	estate pinot noir: 38% clone 828, 17% 115, 17% 2a, 8% 459, 8% 667, 8% 777, and 4% pommard 4
vineyard source	ampelos vineyard – first in US to be certified sustainability in practice, organic and biodynamic
alcohol	14.2%
pH	3.70
barrel aging	33 months
oak profile	50% new french oak from our favorite producers - 50% neutral oak