

# 2013 Hilltop Ranch Pinot Noir Barrel Selection

*Pinnacle Series, Limited Edition*

Dark ruby in color with aromas of white pepper, black cherries and toasted oak. This wine is rich, seamless and opulent with silky tannins. A weighty mouthfeel gives way to a long finish, dark fruit and spices.

## Wine Specs

**Vintage** 2013

**Varietal** Pinot Noir

**Appellation** Monterey County

**Vineyard Designation** Hilltop Ranch

**Harvest Date** October 3, 2013

**Aging** 14 months

**Cooperage** French Oak Barrels, 50% new

**Bottling Date** January 31, 2015

**Alcohol %** 13.9

## Production Notes

37 cases

## Winemaker Notes

The grapes were harvested by hand and transported to the winery and fermented there, using 15% whole clusters. After fermentation the wine gently drained and pressed, settled in a tank overnight, then put down to barrel where it underwent malolactic fermentation and ageing sur lies. For this special release we chose two barrels -- one new French oak, the other an older French oak barrel -- that we particularly liked and really loved when they were blended together.



## Vineyard Notes

This first limited Pinnacle series bottling of Pinot Noir is from our Estate vineyard 700 feet above sea level and 14 miles from the ocean in Carmel Valley. The grapes that come from this vineyard are generally of small size and are much darker and richer than most Pinot Noir fruit, and we attribute this to soil, clonal selections, and climate. The soil is known locally as “chalk rock” which is a mineral-rich shale. This soil reluctantly surrenders its nutrients, making the vines struggle, thus producing a flavorful, interesting wine. This vineyard is managed sustainably in the Carmel River watershed and is located only a few hundred feet from the lower Carmel Valley AVA. Starting with this vintage, I am now tasting a distinctive character in this wine from year-to-year. This was the twelfth leaf of this vineyard and the 9th crop it had produced. The soil and site were challenging to the vines as it is dry, rocky and hilly but perhaps they have finally established themselves to a point of distinctive expression, which is a very exciting development in the life of this vineyard.

