

GARY FARRELL

VINEYARDS & WINERY

2021 SANFORD & BENEDICT VINEYARD PINOT NOIR STA. RITA HILLS

Vineyards

In 1971 Richard Sanford and Michael Benedict took a chance on a spring fed farm on the north facing slopes of the east west traversing Santa Ynez River on California's Central Coast and planted what became Sanford & Benedict Vineyards to Pinot Noir. The success of this site depends on the maritime influences of the Pacific Ocean. The movement of fog and cooling winds up valley and the soil, a living medium of minerals and organic material, is quite unique to this growing region. A byproduct of receding seas, river-deposited particles, landslides, and the slow weathering of ancient stone, which in the Sta. Rita Hills AVA includes shale, serpentine, and sandstone. The Sanford & Benedict Vineyard is the cornerstone of this iconic AVA and continues to produce exceptional fruit.

Vintage

2021 was a spectacular vintage. It was a drought year, so Mother Nature was responsible for trimming yields and producing a plentiful and beautifully balanced crop. In 2021, the clusters were medium in size and the berries were plump with a good number of seeds, excellent skin to juice ratio and beautiful acidity. The summer months gave us beautiful ripening weather with very few heat spikes, allowing the grapes to ripen evenly, while having time to develop lots of flavor. Veraison began in mid to late July, and the weather until harvest was perfectly moderate, yielding excellent hang time and world-class wines.

Winemaking

Grapes were harvested in the cool morning hours and then brought to the winery. After careful hand sorting, ~80% of the fruit was gently de-stemmed, then transferred to small, open-top tanks, and 20% of the fruit was added later as whole clusters. The juice was chilled to 45°F and allowed to cold soak for five days before fermentation was started. During fermentation, the cap was gently punched down 2-3 times daily. After fermentation, the new wine and its solids were allowed to sit in a tank for 10-15 days of extended maceration, a period during which the tannins soften, and the primary fermentation esters develop more complexity. The wine was then gently pressed off the skins and seeds, inoculated for malolactic fermentation, and racked into 40% new French oak barrels (light toast François Frères, Tonnellerie O, & Ana Selection) for 10 months of barrel aging on primary lees.

Tasting Notes

A deeply aromatic mélange of dark cherries and hibiscus intermingle with dried herbs and green tobacco, enticing the senses into flavors driven by plum and huckleberry, and punctuated by savory black tea and cedar. Layered and complex, though on the lighter side for body, the very fine tannins and zippy acidity bring focus and persistence.

Appellation

Sta. Rita Hills

Vineyards

Sanford & Benedict

Composition

100% Pinot Noir

Fermentation & Aging

10 months in 40% new French oak

Alcohol

14.2%

pH / T.A.

3.23 / 6.9 gm/L

Production

535 Cases

Bottling Date

June 10, 2022

Release Date

September 2024

Retail Price

\$75