



TALISMAN

2011 Wildcat Mountain Vineyard Pinot noir

Los Carneros

Talisman Winery is dedicated to the crafting of exquisite, soulful Pinot Noirs that are true to their roots and accurately reflect the terroir and personality of their vineyard origin.

About the Talisman Logo

The Talisman logo is a stylized representation of a Native American medicine wheel. The elements of the medicine wheel represent the circle of life and the four directions, reminding us of our place in the universe. The rays around the medicine wheel represent the sun, which provides energy for life on Earth and ripens grapes, allowing us to revel in the pleasures of life, including fine wine.

Vineyards and Winemaking

Situated high on the southern flank of the mountain range defining the western edge of Sonoma Valley, Wildcat Mountain Vineyard is an outlier as it straddles both Los Carneros and Sonoma Coast appellations. The highest vineyard in the area at an elevation at 750', it sits on very rocky, well-drained soils of volcanic origin, exposed to the full brunt of fog and cold airflow that streams off the upper reaches of San Pablo Bay. This is an ideal place to grow top-tier Pinot noir grapes. Formerly grazing land, the vineyard was established by Nancy and Tony Lilly with their partner, Steve MacRostie in 1998. The quality of the vineyard bears testimony to the vision and tenacity of several generations of Nancy's family, which has been the steward of this land since 1940.

The 2011 vintage was a challenge by any measure and we managed to dodge every bullet that came our way. The vintage started slowly, due to cold, rainy weather in March, then our crop was reduced by more cold-rainy weather in June that greatly reduced the crop. The summer was cool, so the season stretched out into what seemed at the time to be eternity. We finally picked the grapes October 3. As the last bin full of grapes was loaded onto the truck for the trip down the mountain to the winery, the first raindrops of the season fell from the sky.

There was nothing unusual about the winemaking process. We started with a conscientious hand sorting and we used about 20% whole cluster in the fermenter. The grapes from all three vineyard blocks were co-fermented in a single tank. The winemaking regime included our normal cold soak prior to a takeover by feral yeasts, followed by an extended maceration, and gentle pressing. Minimal settling occurred before going to barrel for malolactic fermentation and aging. We expended a lot of effort to figure out how to do as little as possible during the winemaking process. Total time in the fermenter was 35 days.

Tasting Notes

There's a lot going on in this wine – Plum, cherry, earthy and aromatic pipe tobacco, a little toasty barrel note, iodine, mushroom, and a hint of moist redwood forest. It's an interesting and complex wine. On top of this, there's a compelling hint of the savory flavor of shoyu on the palate. Texturally, the wine is round in the mid-palate and slides into a graceful, persistent finish.

Details

Vineyard planted in: 1998

Vine spacing: 6' x 8'

Vine density: 908 vines per acre

Clones/selections: Pommard, Dijon 115, Dijon 777

Rootstock: 110R, 3309, 101-14

pH: 3.69

Titratable acidity: 5.8 g/L

Alcohol: 14.1% by volume

Yield: 2.4 tons of grapes per acre

Barrel aging: 20 months, 60% new French oak

121 cases produced