

ROAD 31 WINE CO.

grin-inducing pinot

Road 31 Wine Co. 2021 Pinot Noir Napa Valley

Harvest dates: Sept 9th and 12th

Oak: 33% new; (50% French, 50% Tokaji/Hungarian)

pH at bottle: 3.65

Alcohol at bottle: 13.9%

Brix at harvest: 24.7 to 25.5

Time on Oak: 11 months

TA at bottle: 5.53 g/L

Total production: 750 cases

Vineyard: Four plots across two vineyards contributed to this wine. From the Green Island, at the southern mouth of the Napa River, where the water spills into the San Pablo/San Francisco Bay, comes the prettiness of clone 115 and power of clone 667. Stanly Ranch, in Carneros just northwest across the Napa River from Green Island, provides clone 114 structure and robustness of clone 777.

Vintage: Though made-for-TV flames burned up the West Coast yet again this summer, and the pesky drought continues, Mother Nature apparently hath both fury and fairness. After multiple years of ravaging Napa, none of the fires nor smoke reached the valley this year. I overheard another winemaker quip, "There was nothing left to burn around here." And there is some truth to that. But the breezes blew in off the Bay all season, pushing the smoke towards our neighbors to the east (sorry Nevada, Idaho, Utah ... New York). The growing season was long, with moderate temperatures; harvest was unrushed; and the fruit picked out beautifully.

Winemaking: A three-day cold soak preceded 15-16 days in the fermenter. Fermentations were clean and smooth. Run to barrel before the finish of fermentation, the wine sat on its gross lees (without oxygen nor racking) for the entire year of aging, which adds a creamy texture and significant weight to an already substantial wine. A mixture of Tokaji (Hungarian) and Mercey (French) oak contributes a nice blend of spice (particularly nutmeg) and vanilla to the profile.

Wine: What a wine this 2021 Road 31 Napa Valley Pinot Noir is. Imagine Harry Potter, Gal Gadot, Elvis (the early days, not the donut-eating-sequin-wings years), and a 1962 Ferrari GTO all wrapped together in velour. Pull the cork and you may find yourself suddenly reciting Shakespearean sonnets from memory, understanding string theory, and feeling an inexplicable desire — and capability — to dance the tango like a blind Al Pacino. Yes, it is that good.

--Kent Fortner (Winemaker/Truck Owner)



NAPA VALLEY

1175 Azuar Drive, Quarters U Mare Island, California 94592 707.649.1200 www.road31.com