

ROAD 31 WINE CO.

grain-inducing pinot

Road 31 Wine Co. 2022 Pinot Noir Napa Valley

Harvest Dates: Sept 9th and Sept 12th

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

pH at bottle: 3.67

Alcohol at bottle: 13.9%

Brix at harvest: 24.9-26.1

Time on Oak: 11 months

TA at bottle: 5.65 g/L

Total production: 880 cases

Vineyard: Three blocks across two vineyards contributed to this wine. Both vineyards are in the Napa half of Carneros, and enjoy commanding views of the mouth of the Napa River where it spills into the San Pablo/San Francisco Bay. Very cool sites indeed. Stanly Ranch Vineyard is a set of sandy rolling hills, from which comes the prettiness of clone 115 and power of clone 667. Huichica Ranch lies one mile to the west, on a very steep and rocky hillside, providing the elegance and color of the Pommard clone.

Vintage: This is a harvest where it was particularly great to be working with an early-ripening varietal (like Pinot Noir). Napa had some glorious ripening weather through the growing season, and as we worked our way into the customary early-September harvest time. Fruit reached perfection, and was picked, just before a worrisome five-day heat strike arrived in mid-September, with temperatures topping 105 degrees. Some disturbing rains quickly followed that heat, affecting quality and pushing picking into dangerously late territory for other (later-ripening) varietals. I was super pleased with the quality of the fruit that came in during an otherwise variable harvest period.

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 Mercuray (French) oak contributes a nice blend of spice (particularly nutmeg) and vanilla to the profile.

Wine: This is a wine that uses multiple layers of delicacy to deliver a summation of incredible depth. Cate Blanchet in a bottle. A beautiful ruby-red hue accompanies initial aromas of red and dark ripe fruits, vanilla, cinnamon and a touch of nutmeg. The wine has both depth and width in the mouth, with just enough tannin and acid to support the dark fruits, earth, leather, tobacco, and an extremely long finish in the mouth. There is power in nuance. Very drinkable now, but I think this one might have the legs to go 7-10 years from vintage date in the cellar.

--Kent Fortner (Winemaker/Truck Owner)



NAPA VALLEY