

# ROAD 31 WINE CO.

*grin-inducing pinot*

## Road 31 Wine Co. 2023 Pinot Noir Carneros Napa Valley

**Harvest dates:** Oct 4th and 6th

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

**pH at bottle:** 3.59

**Alcohol at bottle:** 13.9%

**Brix at harvest:** 24.5 to 25.4

**Time on Oak:** 11 months

**TA at bottle:** 5.5 g/L

**Total production:** 885 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 was a really long, cool growing seasons. We had glorious, much-needed significant rain (finally) over winter, which pushed bud break a little later than normal due to saturated soils. But then the whole summer was surprisingly cool, devoid of the typical heat strikes. Harvest didn't kick in until the first week of October, which is almost a month later than normal. And the later, cooler weather during crush made for a much more relaxed harvest pace.

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

**Wine:** Don't let the delicate and pretty nature of this wine fool you, it's got the goods. Natalie Portman with Thor's hammer behind her back. I love the nose on this: rose, dark fruit, and this hint of leather (yup, leather) that remind me the vintage seating in the classic old Broadway theaters. A high hint of chocolate too—one of my favorite foods (people overlook the emotional nutritional value of chocolate). Then the mouth has a lot more zip than expected; this is a lively wine, strong and lovely acidity, juicy, if you will, with super clean bright red fruit on the mid-palate. An extended finish that has just the right amount of heat mixed with an elegant vanilla note. If past vintages (that fermented and tasted this same way early) are an indicator, this wine will go the distance in your cellar for a decade or more.

--Kent Fortner (Winemaker/Truck Owner)



NAPA VALLEY