

Pey-Marin

• P I N O T N O I R “ T R O I S F I L L E S ”

• V I N T A G E 2 0 0 3 •

Winter and spring precipitation in Marin County was average (but late) and led to yet another very small crop. Summer was typically bright and dry with persistent early coastal morning fog and afternoon cooling winds. An extreme heat spell in September shriveled Pinot Noir grown in neighboring “cool” districts (Carneros at 105 F?) but had no effect on our west Marin vines. Sunny and dry summer conditions extended the ripening period into October and produced beautifully compact bunches with exemplary balance and finesse. Vine health was excellent, but our small “set” meant crop management techniques were negligible. In the end, Mother Nature gave us less than 2 tons/acre !

• V I N E Y A R D •

Our “Trois Filles” Pinot Noir comes from two vineyards (seven and fifteen years old) located less than eight miles from the frigid Pacific Ocean in west Marin County. The vineyard terrain is characterized by gently rolling coastal hills which offer a plethora of microclimates well-suited to this finicky varietal. Its soil profile is largely decomposed marine sedimentary material and *Haire* loam and is moderately fertile. We farm these sites incorporating many sustainable viticultural practices (compost, hand tilling, ladybugs, cover crops). Our vines are heavily influenced by the Pacific Oceans considerable climatic prowess which results in extremely small and concentrated berries. Bud burst, flowering, “set” and harvest are usually at least three weeks after the so-called “cool-climate” districts of Carneros & Russian River. Our small Pinot Noir berries (Dijon Clone 115 for brilliance & perfume and Clone 667 for concentration & intensity) have quite high “skin to juice” ratios, leading to a deeply-colored wine with a broad aromatic spectrum and rich texture. Finally, our frigid vineyard site (arguably as cold or colder than even Santa Maria, Santa Ynez or the Sonoma Coast) gives us naturally high acidity, a hallmark of the great Pinot Noirs of Burgundy.

Regional Composition: Marin County – 100% *Varietal Composition:* 100% Pinot Noir (Dijon Clones 115 & 667)

• F E R M E N T A T I O N A N D A G I N G •

Our *modus operandi* calls for very gentle handling from vineyard to bottle. Our small, compact Pinot Noir bunches were hand-harvested in two lots; September 29 (25.7 Brix) and October 7 (26.3 Brix), hand-sorted, destemmed & crushed (with 5% whole berry) and then “cold soaked” for four days in small (3 ton), open-top temperature-controlled fermenters. The “cold soak” technique helps gently extract vibrant color and rich flavor - but not alcohol. On Day 5 we allowed fermentation to begin naturally with native yeasts and later inoculated with Lalvin 212 Burgundian yeast. Moderate fermentation temperature (85° F) and 1-2 manual punch-downs per day helped build structure and texture. There were no pump-overs (too rough) and only a very modest acid adjustment (hardly any needed with west Marin Pinot!). On Day 9 we gently pressed our still-fermenting Pinot Noir into 59 gallon French oak barriques where it slowly completed primary and secondary fermentations. These barrels are the very best, air dried for three years, medium toast with toasted heads, sixty-five percent new and handcrafted by the fabled cooperages of *Cadus & Remond*. Fourteen months in barrel with zero racking, zero fining and extensive “*sur lie*” stirring contributed exotic spiciness and wonderful mouth-feel. After culling two lesser quality barrels we bottled in January 2005. We call this special wine “Trois Filles” (Three Daughters) as a loving gesture to our three young daughters - they get a real kick out of the label!

pH: 3.44 *TA:* 0.61 g/100mL *Alcohol:* 13.8% *Total Production:* 11 barrels (269 cases) *Suggested Retail Price:* \$33

“Our aim is to showcase our Marin County vineyards soils and uniquely cool climate attributes by crafting small lots of Pinot Noir which display exemplary varietal integrity, balance over sheer power and a proclivity to improve in cellar.”

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