

2018 Reserve Pinot Noir *Santa Lucia Highlands*

MER SOLEIL



Tasting Notes: A vibrant cranberry hue, this wine features scents of fresh cherry tarte and toasted wood, with a caramelized sweetness of vanilla. The nose is undeniably Santa Lucia Highlands - a wet stone minerality and subtle oceanic character evoke fresh breezes off the Pacific, signaling this wine's cool coastal origin. Opening texture of slight graphite awakens every part of the palate. Entry is fresh, yet integrated with mouth-filling creaminess. On the finish, toasted bread notes balance the wisp of natural acidity and cherry tarte echoing the nose.

Charlie Wagner Owner and Winemaker

A growing region unlike any other in California

We were first drawn to the Central Coast's Santa Lucia Highlands (SLH) more than 30 years ago, in search of the best conditions to make Chardonnay. A half-hour drive south of Monterey, the region has a rugged beauty and dramatic weather – morning fog followed by bright sun and cooling breezes off the Pacific Ocean. Cooler summer temperatures lead to an extended growing season – ideally suited to producing Pinot Noir, which thrives in a more moderate environment.

A family history making Pinot Noir and farming in the Santa Lucia Highlands

While we introduced this wine in recent years, we have worked with Pinot Noir since the earliest days of Caymus Vineyards (founded by our family in 1972). For a short period, we produced Caymus Special Selection Pinot Noir from Napa Valley, gaining experience in working with this varietal. We also have a long history in the SLH, as we joined a handful of others in seeking to make high-end wines from the region. Our belief in its exceptional quality of fruit led us to join the effort to make the SLH an AVA in 1991.

Fresh, young – and complex

We source grapes for this wine from vineyards in the southern and middle sections of the SLH, with a diversity of fruit enabling us to create layers of aromas and flavors. Keeping grapes on the vine longer creates heightened interest – we push grapes to full ripeness while maintaining this wine's freshness by limiting its time in oak. The 2018 vintage spent seven months in barrel, using mostly new French oak to create integrated toasty notes.



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