

Ceritas

S P R I N G 2 0 1 4 I S S U E

Dear Friends,

When we started Ceritas back in 2005, our vision was to find vineyard sites that allowed for unique expressions along the North Coast of California. In the beginning, many vineyards were under contract with the grapes being sold to other wineries. While we were eager to find new sources, we also remained steadfast on seeking out vineyards that met our criteria. It was the winter of 2011/2012 that brought many new vineyard sites to our attention. All told, we added four new sites, one in the Santa Cruz Mountains, two on the West Sonoma Coast and another in Anderson Valley. Today, we work with eight different vineyards.

2012 VINTAGE

The North Coast growing season was characterized by evenness of weather, with few challenges from Mother Nature. Yields were the highest in recent memory for many growers including those on the coast. This was the most abundant crop since 2009.

But even an ideal vintage like 2012 requires diligence in the vineyard. We are fortunate that our direct relationship with our grower partners enables us to respond to each site's needs. For example, uneven flowering required additional fruit thinning passes in the vineyard to allow the clusters to ripen in an even, balanced manner. All told, we made 3 to 5 fruit thinning passes per vineyard, and the results paid off.

MONOPOLES

People have often ask about our use of the term "Monopole" when speaking about our wines. The term Monopole is defined as an area or vineyard controlled by a single winery. When you see this designation for Ceritas it means that the grapes and resulting wine from this vineyard are only available from Ceritas.

SPRING RELEASES

2012 PINNACLE VINEYARD CHARDONNAY / SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS / MONOPOLE

Just downhill from Peter Martin Ray vineyards is the Pinnacle site, the second of the two Santa Cruz mountains sites we farm. Planted in the 1970s to the Mt. Eden clone of Chardonnay, the southeast-facing vineyard rises 1,600 feet above Saratoga, on steep slopes of nutrient-depleted shale with no topsoil. This is our oldest site.

We seized upon the opportunity to farm this tricky site: exposed vineyards on 30% slopes, dry farmed, at high elevation. But with critical shade from the head trained vines- the only head trained vines we work with- and good drainage provided by the slope, the fruit reaps the benefits of a longer hang time and greater complexity of flavors at lower brix. Consequently, the wine is brighter than its sister wine from the site above, and truly reflects its soil. We are thrilled to have exclusive access to this fruit.

Crisp citrus character on nose featuring hard lemon candy and mandarin, complemented by savory and floral notes of fresh hay, peach pit, hazelnut and gardenia. Elegant on the palate with serious acidity and silky texture.

2012 PETER MARTIN RAY VINEYARD CHARDONNAY / SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS

Nestled high in the hills at 1,800 feet, above the town of Saratoga, lays Peter Martin Ray vineyard, our highest site. One of two sites that we farm in the Santa Cruz mountains, this vineyard is steeped in history dating back to 1943, when stockbroker-turned-winemaker Martin Ray planted the original Chardonnay vines. It was a brave venture to plant in such meager Franciscan shale soils without any measurable topsoil.

When Martin Ray's son, Peter Martin Ray, took over the farming of this site, he replanted to the Mt. Eden clone of Chardonnay in the early 1980s. A few gifted winemakers, namely our friends from Arnot Roberts, rediscovered these vineyards, and encouraged us to join in. What makes this fruit so remarkable is a

direct result of the vines' constant struggle: raw farmed with minimal manmade input; the vines are constantly seeking water, nutrients and sustenance from deep in the hillside. Characterized by small berries on tiny clusters, this fruit yields wine that is distinctive for its salty, mineral palate, persistent flavors and lingering finish.

Rich, deeply pitched aromas of forest floor and almond, lifted by chamomile, lemon verbena and mint. The palate is medium-bodied and elegant, with focused savory notes and a long finish with vibrant acidity.

2012 HACIENDA SECOYA VINEYARD PINOT NOIR / ANDERSON VALLEY / MONOPOLE

John was first introduced to this vineyard in the Deep End of Anderson Valley a decade ago while working with another winery. We couldn't be happier to have exclusive access to this vineyard, as it provides an insightful contrast to our Pinots from other appellations. The Deep End of Anderson Valley is renowned as an optimal growing area for cool-climate Pinot Noir, due to cool ocean air penetrating through the valley. Named for the surrounding redwood forest, this southwest facing vineyard sits on an elevated bench just above the valley floor, a stone's throw from the town of Navarro. The vines were planted in 1995 to the Pommard clone in soils that are volcanic in origin and sandstone-based, with a red hue revealing the greater than average iron content. Between the influence of coastal fog and the high proportion of clay in the soil, the vines stay hydrated throughout the growing season.

Crystalline black raspberry fruit, with smoked meat and soil tones. Raspberry fruit on entry with fine acidity and firm structure. Meaty flavors of wild game and duck complemented with a long, dry finish.

2012 ELLIOTT VINEYARD PINOT NOIR / SONOMA COAST / MONOPOLE

Tucked away atop a saddle ridge in one of our favorite areas, Elliot Vineyard sits between Hellenthal and Hirsch Vineyards. We were drawn to this site partly because of its unique perch on the American plate, but primarily because its soils offer exactly what we look for in a Pinot vineyard. With slightly less clay