

Ceritas

SPRING 2020 RELEASE

Dear Friends:

We are excited to announce the first release of our 2018 wines. The vintage was one of the best vintages in the past 25 years along the northern coast of California. Near-perfect weather throughout the growing season, ample soil moisture from periodic gentle rains, and moderate crop levels resulted in wines of amazing depth and precision. The wines from this vintage show purity of fruit and bright acidities unlike any other vintage we've seen. They are not to be missed.

These are wines that are enjoyable now but will also reward those who can keep their hands off of them.

NEWS \ 2018 VINTAGE

In 2018, Ceritas signed long term leases on four new parcels all found inside the West Sonoma Coast – Carex (Chardonnay), Zephyr (Chardonnay), Senna (Pinot Noir), and finally Rivina Pinot Noir - more details below. Our holdings at Ceritas continue to evolve as we search out the best possible pieces from which to make wine. We are truly honored to be working with these sites and ecstatic about the wines that have resulted.

RIVINA \ WEST SONOMA COAST Monopole

Our first release of Rivina Pinot Noir is exciting and not to be missed. Nearly 18 years ago, a vineyard was planted by industry friends in the northernmost reaches of the Fort-Ross Seaview sub-appellation of the West Sonoma Coast. When planted, the vine density (2400 vines/acre) was almost unheard of. The tight spacing resulted in small vines growing intense fruit, all the while driving the roots deep into the hard sandstone soils with high concentrations of quartz.

We source a small section of this vineyard, which is planted using the revered Calera selection massale bud wood from the Ceritas Occidental Vineyard. Small, tight clusters with small berries result in a wine of great depth and concentration while retaining an amazing amount of natural acidity. This wine is a

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great parallel to the Occidental Pinot Noir as you get to see the differences between the two sites using the same clonal source.

Brilliantly defined, mineral-infused black and blue fruit, showing laser-like focus with tons of complexity. The palate is medium-bodied with notes of juicy raspberry, rose petal, and saline. Fine tannins are backed by spice cake (60% whole cluster) and a superb line of acidity energizes the wine from start to finish. Harmonious.

OCCIDENTAL PINOT NOIR \ WEST SONOMA COAST Monopole

Occidental Vineyard is smack dab in the middle of the West Sonoma Coast's Grand Cru belt. The site is perfect for growing Pinot Noir. South facing and staring right at the Pacific Ocean results in the vineyard being drenched in the fog and cold air whipping off the sea. Cold-diffused light penetrates the canopy, gently ripening the grapes. Carefully selected heritage selection massale Calera clonal material is planted in shallow fractured blue schist soils and quartz with moderate clay content. For the 2018 vintage, we separated a small lot of the Occidental fruit that we fermented cold, 100% whole cluster, with almost no cap manipulation. This created lift and vibrancy in the wine to counter balance the natural density from this site. This is the wine we had always dreamed of making from this site since we began with it in 2016. We are thrilled. Perfumed and masculine. A singular expression not found elsewhere.

Very precise bouquet of tart cherry, black raspberry, and violet aromas – quintessential Occidental. The palate is medium-bodied with a gentle grip (50% whole cluster) with moderate acidity. Good structure with a noticeable saline finish lingers in the mouth, revealing flavors of dark cherry, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Perfectly balanced with juicy long finish. Delicious.

TROUT GULCH CHARDONNAY \ SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS

Trout Gulch sits in a narrow slot canyon in the Southern Santa Cruz Mountains. The vineyards' proximity to the Pacific Ocean makes this our coldest Chardonnay site. Cool ocean air is pushed up into the

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canyon in the evening and holds long into the first hours of the following day, allowing the vines to ripen the grapes slowly and steadily. The uplifted oceanic floor soils are well-drained and do not retain heat, pushing the coolness deep into the root zone allowing a trickle of minerality to be absorbed daily. The most crystalline wine we've ever made from this site. Acids were so racy this vintage that we dared to put 5% new oak on this wine – shhh don't tell. You'd never guess it but your palette will thank you. Down-right delicious.

Very focused nose hints of sea spray, salt, and star jasmine. Bursting flavors of yuzu lemon and flint are framed by energetic acidity. The wine unfurls slowly with refined citrus fruit laced with spice and mint. Very harmonious with a palpable sense of energy towards the persistent finish. Pure and crystalline with nothing but class.

PETER MARTIN RAY CHARDONNAY \ SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS Monopole

Peter Martin Ray sits 1800 feet above the valley floor right in the thick of the San Francisco Bay daily fog dance. Being perched high above the valley floor, the grapes see more sunshine than our other sites, resulting in thicker skins which brings a savory masculine note to the wine reminiscent of the greatest Burgundies. Old vines dating back to 1971 have never been irrigated, requiring the roots to search deep into the steep hillside for water and nutrients. This vintage reminds us of 2011, our first vintage from this site and the coldest vintage in 40 years. A little more taught for Peter Martin Ray with a hint of flintiness that we adore. A classic.

Intense bouquet of lemon thyme, crushed schist, traces of orange pith, and citrus peel that gain intensity with aeration. The palate is underpinned by a razor-sharp bead of acidity with flavors of lemongrass and saline aftertaste. Reminds me of the revered 2011 from this site. Taught, focused and briny. Brilliant.

2018 VINTAGE SUMMARY

Overall, the winter of 2017-2018 reminded us of the winters from decades ago. Rain fell every week

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throughout the winter, allowing the water to slowly and evenly penetrate deep into the topsoil and bedrock below.

Early spring was dry and sunny throughout. With favorable spring weather, bud break began around March 13th, almost a week earlier than 2017, and two weeks earlier than 2016. The beginning of April was cool, with the vines starting slowly but steadily growing without too many signs of stress. May was warm and dry and the shoots just exploded towards the top wire after growing so slowly for the previous two months. As we approached flowering, the forecast looked to be favorable for a healthy crop. Flowering took place under blue skies and warm temperatures, virtually eliminating crop loss. First flowers were observed on May 18th and full flowering arriving 4-8 days later depending on the site.

For most of June and July, we saw normal summer temperatures, allowing the coastal fog to influence the growing season more than any of the past 7 vintages. Things were looking like we might be harvesting in mid-September and our hopes were growing for the most classic growing season we had seen since 2005.

The beginning of August was cool, giving us hope that the warm conditions often experienced in August would not come. And the warmer temperatures DID NOT come. Moderate temperatures continued right through August and into harvest. The moderate temperatures allow us to pinpoint our harvest date as ripening took place slowly and evenly, resulting in a great depth of flavors with higher than average levels of acidity.

In the end, we harvested most of the beautiful fruit in the middle of September. Yields were up slightly as compared to previous years – 1.72 to 2.42 tons per acre. We began harvesting on September 6th and concluded on September 25th.

This is a vintage that will be talked about for many years to come. Why? A heralded vintage such as 2018 doesn't happen as often as you think. This one is classic, and about as close to perfection as one could expect.

We are thankful for your continued support of our family winery. Be well.

John and Phoebe Raytek