

ANTHILL FARMS

2017 Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir — Sonoma Coast, Sonoma County, CA

2017 Harvest: Two thousand seventeen was a year of extremes in the North Coast. Cool winter and spring led to a normal, even crop. This was the second year back to normal rainfall after a handful of drought years with most of the precipitation coming in winter and early spring, further enlivening the soils and ecosystems surrounding the vines. As the vintage moved into summer we began to see severe heat spikes starting in June and recurring until Labor Day weekend when temperatures reached well above the 100's. Summer and fall, sad to say, seem to have transformed into drier, warmer and unfortunately windier times in California. This trinity is ultimately the recipe for the devastating fires we saw in October. For Anthill, the grapes had been all harvested, and, aside from going extra-old-school on a couple of fermenting lots because of massive power outages, we weren't affected with what went to barrel. Overall, the resulting wines reflect a Classic character. Plenty of fruit and texture with general structure that reflects more of the Old World.

Vineyard: This appellation is almost universally described as “sprawling,” as it encompasses half or more of the county. Our fruit comes from two of the coolest, most “coastal” parts of this appellation: the low coast, west of Sebastopol on the edge of the Petaluma Gap; and the high coast, the first or second ridge inland from the Pacific, farther to the north. These sites, while geographically distinct, are linked by the direct influence of the Pacific's cool, marine air, often delaying ripening well into October.

Winery: The fruit was harvested at around 22-23 brix. We used about 40% whole clusters in the fermenter and destem the remaining fruit. The grapes had a long cold soak, upwards of 12 days, where cap was punched only once daily and was protected by dry ice. We don't inoculate or add enzymes at primary stage and let uncultivated yeasts perform the fermentation, which is typically hot and fast, usually with three punch downs per day. We very gently pressed the wine when it has been dry for a few days in the fermenter. We do not separate the free run and press fractions. At this point, some of the whole berries do release a touch of fresh, carbonically macerated juice. This means that the fermentation is officially completed in barrel. We use no new oak on the appellation Pinots. We do not initiate malolactic fermentation, which often will last uninfluenced until the following spring. We employed a bit of lees stirring at the beginning of élevage but then allowed the wine to uncoil in barrel with periodic topping. We by and large bottle the pinots 16-18 months post-harvest.

Tasting: The Sonoma Coast once again offers terrific depth, complexity and value in this vintage. Beautifully expressive and resonant, the 2017 offers notable richness in its succulent red cherry, plum and spice nuances. This open-knit, juicy Pinot from a wide range of excellent sites on the coast will drink well with minimal cellaring and has the potential to improve for a handful of years. Drink now-2025. Alcohol 13.8%.

Anthill Farms
4791 Dry Creek Road No. 3-4
Healdsburg, CA 95448
707.490.5191
www.anthillfarms.com