



2016 Wendling Vineyard Block E Pinot Noir

History and Philosophy

Littorai Wines is a small, family-owned and operated winery producing vineyard designated Chardonnay and Pinot Noir from the true north coast of California: the coastal mountains of Sonoma and Mendocino Counties. Proprietors Heidi and Ted Lemon are lifelong Winemakers. Ted Lemon began his career at the age of 22 by working for four years in the heart of Burgundy and in 1982, was the first American hired to manage a property in Burgundy at Domaine Guy Roulot in Meursault. Where some see technology as the route to great wines, we see farming. We derive our sustainable farming techniques from the fertile cross currents of permaculture, agro-ecology and biodynamics. Our winery is situated on a 30 acre integrated biodynamic farm where we produce as many of the vineyard and farm needs on site as possible. Our Estate produced compost is our “fertilizer” of choice.

Expressed in acreage terms, beginning in 2017:

- 100% of Littorai’s vineyard sources is farmed using only organically certified materials
- 85% is farmed using biodynamic methods (all sites we own or lease and most others)
- 49% is estate production

The goal of winegrowing is to produce the finest wine, and that such wine should be a product of the vineyard, not the cellar.

Vineyard

Located in the coolest part of Anderson Valley, and, is really is not in the valley at all. It is the most northwesterly vineyard in the AVA and the closest to the coast. Littorai was offered the first choice of parcels on the property. We decided on a steeply sloped, dramatic block which faces due south. We chose the (over 14!) rootstock and clonal combinations for the Littorai section, with most of the bud wood coming from our own vineyards. The vineyard has been farmed biodynamically with extraordinary care from the very beginning. We have added the “Block E” designation to the label of this wine to highlight the exceptional quality of this special Littorai block.

Vintage Information

The 2016 vintage produced relatively large quantities of wine. Thorough green harvesting was essential to wine quality and we made multiple passes in each vineyard. Berry and cluster sizes were heterogeneous, a mix of large berries, medium size and tiny, seedless berries. Clusters also ranged from very small to large. Despite the rounder mid palates and the higher yields, there are some surprisingly structured wines in 2016. Indeed, almost everything about the 2016s is a significant contrast to the 2015s. They have less color density and are considerably less fruity. They have a delicacy which the boisterous 2015s lacked. The 2016s are beautifully floral wines, brimming with aromas of red roses. Several should show very well at an early age and should not require much cellaring to enjoy. Our suggestion is to hold the 2014s and 2015s and to enjoy some of the 2016s while waiting for those vintages to come around.

Tasting Notes

Cherry and earth. Blackberries and huckleberry. Confectionary notes. The aromas are very fresh and bright, much like the arresting 2015 version. Mouthcoating tannins dominate a hidden, lush midpalate. We were surprised how quickly the 2015 shed its tannins after bottling and it will be fascinating to see if this does the same.

APPELLATION

Anderson Valley

SOILS

Bearwallow-Wolfey complex: red to brown well-drained, shallow sandy loam, sandstone and shales with only 6” to 12” of topsoil

FARMING

Farmed using organic materials and biodynamic methods, not certified

VINE AGE

Planted in 2010

CLONES

11 different selections

WHOLE CLUSTER

15% in 2016

BARREL AGEING

16 months French Oak, 25% new

PRODUCTION

653 cases

ALCOHOL

13.4% abv

