



## 2006 DIERBERG PINOT NOIR SANTA MARIA VALLEY

### VINTAGE NOTES

Average rainfall followed by warm temperatures in late winter caused a very early bud burst in Santa Barbara County—up to 14 days early in some cases. Mid-spring rains, however, slowed things down and had our vineyard manager on his toes about potential disease pressure. Bloom lasted almost two weeks in parts of the vineyard and set was, consequently, erratic. Summer passed with mild temperatures punctuated by our usual two to three day heat spells, and conditions during veraison were cool, with foggy mornings and mild, windy afternoons. Due to the long growing season, the vines at Dierberg Vineyard began to shutdown in early September, forcing a slightly earlier harvest than usual. Yields were off by about 35%, but the fruit showed a wonderful balance of acid and tannin.

### THE VINEYARD

Dierberg Vineyard is situated atop a sandy loam mesa above the South Bank of the Santa Maria River. The ranch features a series of gently rolling hills and soils that are uncharacteristic of the growing area. The higher loam content and slightly heavier texture of our soil tends to produce Pinot Noirs that are more powerful in structure and more savory in flavor-profile than is typical for the Santa Maria Valley.

We've planted the ranch to a number of different Burgundian clones and some not so common California selections, all on limiting rootstocks adapted to the soil conditions of the property, which offer us a wide palate of colors and textures from which to paint the most accurate picture of our ranch that we can.

Wines from the Dierberg Vineyard—both our own and those from producers who purchase our fruit—take a long time to evolve and unwind, making them rewarding candidates for a sojourn in the wine cellar.

### WINEMAKING

Fruit is harvested by soil type—across several different blocks—rather than by discreet clonal selections. The grapes are destemmed but not crushed and occasionally whole clusters are included based upon the gut instinct of the winemaking team.

Presented with difficult vintage conditions, severe disease pressure and vines that had struggled through the final month of the growing season, the decision was made to harvest a bit earlier than usual and opt for a more understated approach to the wine. Harvesting started at 23.5° Brix (13.2% potential alcohol) and progressed rapidly, finishing within 5 days at 25.8° Brix (roughly 14.5% potential alcohol). Hand sorting was severe, and only the most pristine fruit made it to the fermentor.

Additionally, we chose to include a great deal more stems in 2006, for increased structure and to facilitate more even fermentations.

Very little sulfur is added in the fermentor and no yeast nutrients are used. The must is chilled to 55 degrees Fahrenheit and allowed warm slowly and commence fermentation on its own yeast. Peak fermentation temperatures are in the high 80's and low 90's and the wine stays on its skins for an average of 18 days. The new wine finishes primary fermentation and undergoes secondary fermentation in barrel without the addition of commercial malo-lactic starters. The 2006 Dierberg was aged in 75% new French oak for 17 months, lightly fined with egg whites and bottled unfiltered.

### TASTING NOTES

The 2006 Dierberg Pinot Noir has proven to be somewhat atypical and is a departure from our big, burly house style. The wine exhibits the “sauvage” sage-like note that has come to define the wines from our vineyard, but envelops it in a more elegant frame. It is a sublime and classy wine, with delicate aromas of tea leaf, raspberry and forest floor and a sneaky structural component that keeps it firm and age worthy. The wine is perhaps more Audrey Hepburn than Brigitte Bardot in style. Enjoy this lithe and beautiful wine now with simply flavored food, or age for as many as 10 years to enhance the sage and forest floor notes that characterize the vintage.

Composition: 100% Pinot Noir

Appellation: Santa Maria Valley

Alcohol: 14.9 %

pH: 3.68

Total Acid: 6.2 g/L

## DIERBERG

P.O. Box 1882, Santa Ynez, CA 93460

Phone (805) 693-0744 \* Fax (805) 688-0595

[www.dierbergvineyard.com](http://www.dierbergvineyard.com)