

Seven Mules Vineyard
PINOT NOIR

The Seven Mules Vineyard is located on the former site of the old Baldocci Winery. It has since passed hands over the decades until Lee and Carolyn Martinelli purchased it in 1997. The ancient barn still stands on the estate and once housed seven mules which were used to cultivate the property in the early 1900's. The vineyard site is a series of beautiful rolling knolls which offer a brilliant mountain view of distant erupting geysers to the north. The foggy mornings of the Russian River Valley lend wonderful fruit characteristics to this Burgundian varietal. This petite vineyard is densely planted with 2,000 vines per acre. The two select clones, '114' and '115', are grafted onto the '101-14' rootstock. The vines are trained on a vertical trellis system with the fruit hanging just 24 inches above the ground. The grapes are thinned down to between two and three pounds of fruit per vine. These practices all insure mature fruit flavors in the wine as well as even ripening.

The grapes are picked between 25 and 26 degrees brix to ensure mature ripe fruit flavors. They are hand selected at harvest time by Lee Martinelli, Sr. and Helen Turley, who taste the grapes and choose when to pick according to the developed concentration of flavors in the berries. After picking, the whole berries undergo a long cool fermentation, with indigenous yeast, to generate skin contact and expose fruit character. The juice is gravity fed into small oak barrels with a touch of residual sugar remaining to complete the fermentation process in barrel until dry. It is then allowed to rest and mature in 75% new French oak on its gross lees for 10 months. Being a particular and moody varietal to tamper with this Pinot Noir is minimally handled. This wine is neither heat nor cold stabilized and is unfiltered and unfiltered.

Wine Maker: Helen Turley Asst. Wine Maker: Bryan Kvamme

Seven Mules Pinot Noir in the Press

2000 Vintage

91 pts. Stephen Tanzer

92 pts. Robert Parker, Jr.

"I was knocked-out by the dense ruby-colored 2000 Pinot Noir Seven Mules (14.5% alcohol). Its smoky bouquet of toasty oak, sweet black raspberries, sous-bois (underbrush), and cherry liqueur is followed by a chewy, thick, layered, nearly unctuous Pinot. Drink this long, concentrated, flamboyant offering during its first 7-8 years of life." 92 pts. Robert Parker, Jr.

2001 Vintage

90 pts. Stephen Tanzer

90 pts. Robert Parker, Jr.

"... Cotes de Beaune-like style is the 2001 Pinot Noir Seven Mules. It possesses sweet cherry, cranberry, and strawberry fruit, medium body, excellent acidity for definition, and a long, spicy, subtlety oaky finish." 90 pts. Robert Parker, Jr.

2002 Vintage

93 pts. Wine Spectator

94 pts. Robert Parker, Jr.

“...is a flamboyant, sexy effort displaying a voluptuous texture, and forward cherry, cranberry, and strawberry fruit intermixed with flowery characteristics. It is a fat, fleshy Pinot Noir from a vineyard located on Woolsey Road in Russian River Valley. The most forward, succulent, and decadent of Martinellis 2002 Pinots, it is impossible to resist. Enjoy it over the next 5-6 years.” 94 pts. ~ Robert M. Parker, Jr.