

R. MERLO

ESTATE VINEYARDS

PINOT NOIR DIJON

VINTAGE 2003, TRINITY COUNTY

ESTATE BOTTLED AT THE HYAMPOM VALLEY RANCH, TRINITY COUNTY, CA

WINE DESCRIPTION

A dark red wine with aromas of cherry plums, peppery nutmeg and a hint of dried vanilla bean misted with a gentle floral perfume leading to bold flavors of Queen Ann cherries enshrouded in Fall spices of cinnamon and nutmeg. Bold and smooth cocoa tannins give way to a long, rich finish.

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

2003 began with an extremely cool wet spring. There were several storms that spit snow on the mountains around Hyampom through the end of April. When the sky cleared, the temperatures plummeted. The vines were way behind going into June, but caught up slowly during summer. The Pinot Noir grapes were harvested the last week of September and resulted in wonderful bright wines, missing any effects of the later fall frosts.

FOOD RECOMMENDATIONS

Rack of lamb drizzled with pomegranate reduction sauce is well complimented by this Pinot Noir.

HYAMPOM VALLEY RANCH

The R. Merlo Estate Vineyards are located on the riverbanks of the wild and scenic South Fork of the Trinity River. Surrounded by 6000 ft. mountains on all sides, the vineyards are higher than most California vineyards, at an elevation of 1,250 feet. The valley floor has alluvial soils, allowing for excellent drainage and producing elegant yet complex flavors. The surrounding hillsides are composed of shallow native clay, which helps to create bold, well-structured wines. The growing season - a full three to four weeks later create bold, well-structured wines. The growing season - a full three to four weeks later than that of Napa or Sonoma - allows for a much slower ripening, increasing hang time and creating full concentrated flavors without over-ripening or depleting natural acids.



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| GRAPE SOURCE | Hyampom Valley Ranch, Trinity County, CA |
| AGING | 15 months, in French Oak (20% new oak) |
| TOTAL ACID /pH | .63/3.43 |
| RESIDUAL SUGAR | 0.3% |
| ALCOHOL | 13.3% Alcohol By Volume |
| BOTTLING DATE | September 2005 |
| PRODUCTION | 420 Cases |