



## FOUNDERS RESERVE PINOT NOIR

VINTAGE 2020 • RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY • ESTATE BOTTLED

### OBSERVATIONS ON A NEW VINTAGE

Just when we thought a harvest could not get any more challenging – along comes 2020! The year started off with an emerging drought, then in March, Covid hit, forcing us to rethink how we would continue to operate while keeping our employees safe. About the time we were getting used to our new ways of working and gearing up for harvest, August rolls in bringing with it a heat wave, freak dry lightning storms and wildfires.

Amid much uncertainty, we began our Pinot Noir harvest on August 19th at Vine Hill Ranch. Despite all the additional challenges and stress that this year brought to our winemaking efforts, 2020, just like every year before it, worked out. Best of all, we are thrilled with the quality and style of this year's vintage. Let's all raise a glass and bid this year adieu!

### OUR VINEYARDS

In the heart of Russian River Valley lies our Vine Hill Ranch and to the southwest lies Owsley Vineyard, both of which provided us the fruit for this year's vintage of Founders Reserve Pinot Noir. Vine Hill Ranch, with nearly 300-ft. elevation changes, allows each ridge, slope and valley in the vineyard to contribute unique characteristics to the grapes. Owsley Ranch is known for its dramatic temperature changes from warm days to cool, foggy nights. The constant fluctuating temperatures create concentrated and complex flavors in the grapes.

### ON THE WINE

At Sonoma-Cutrer, we value quality above all and handle our fruit with the utmost care. Grapes are picked by hand, early each morning, into small bins and hand-sorted at our Pinot Barn winery before a gentle destemming. Grapes then go through a four-day cold soak and an eight-to-twelve-day fermentation with the wine being gently punched down by hand in small, open-top fermenters. When fermentation is complete, the wine is carefully pressed using a basket press and gravity racked into barrels. For this vintage, the wine rested in barrel for fourteen months before the final blend was assembled and prepared for bottling on December 9th, 2021. It was then allowed to rest and bottle age for 12 months prior to release.

Each year our winemakers choose their favorite barrels from that harvest to craft our Founders Reserve wines. Sonoma-Cutrer Pinots are known for being profoundly complex and this wine showcases the “best of the best” of our estate-grown fruit from our Owsley and Vine Hill Ranch vineyards. Like prior vintages, this wine is an intense, beautiful deep garnet color. Complex, deep aromas of blackberry, black cherry, dark chocolate with hints of vanilla, spicy cardamom and earthy notes with hints of black tea envelop your senses. This Pinot Noir is medium to full-bodied that is textured and complex with a rich, juicy mid-palate. You will enjoy this wine's robust flavors of dried herbs, sweet baking spices, dark chocolate, and black berry fruits. The finish is long, elegant, and laced with very fine-grained tannins. While not for the faint of heart, this Pinot Noir is made to pair with dishes that require a bold wine. Try with duck, an earthy mushroom dish, or a finely marbled filet.

Our Founders Pinots are built for longevity. Allowing this vintage to cellar age another 2-4 years will further develop the complexity in the wine while softening the tannins.

Alcohol by Vol: 14.2% • TA: 5.98g/L • pH: 3.5 RS g/L (dry) • 100% Pinot Noir  
Fermentation -100% Tank • 100% Malolactic  
Oak aged for 14 months – 33% new, 33% 1yr, 33% 2yr old  
Vineyard-63% Owsley Vineyard, 37% Vine Hill Ranch



**SONOMA-CUTRER®**

Please enjoy our wines responsibly.

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