

# Diora®

2019  
ESTATE GROWN  
LA GRANDE MAJESTÉ  
PINOT NOIR

SAN BERNABE VINEYARD  
MONTEREY

*La Grande Majesté Pinot Noir is a wine more than thirty years in the making beginning in 1988, when the Indelicato family purchased the San Bernabe Vineyard. The present estate includes a mix of gently rolling hills, alluvial terraces, benchlands and foothills, which together offer a wide range of exposures and soil types. Today, the Indelicatos farm the top one-fourth of the vines in the San Bernabe AVA, all of which have been replanted to maximize quality rather than quantity, with a precise match of ideal variety, clone, and rootstock to the micro-terroir of each vineyard block. La Grande Majesté is the first Pinot Noir from this vineyard to carry the San Bernabe appellation; its name is inspired by the magnificent sunset view over the vineyard from its highest point, which climbs the foothills of the Santa Lucia Range.*

## WINEMAKER'S NOTE

A dark ruby in the glass, the wine opens with aromas of strawberries and cherries, a hint of nutmeg and brown sugar. Soft, round tannins and opulent cherry and raspberry flavors with notes of sage define the rich, concentrated palate. The wine instills a lasting impression of rich layered flavors.

— Winemaker, James Ewart

## VINTAGE REPORT

The 2019 Monterey growing season was superb, delivering the kind of classically cool and moderate coastal weather that make San Bernabe Vineyard an ideal home for Burgundian varieties. Mild temperatures, overnight fog, and strong afternoon winds provided extra hang-time, allowing grapes to achieve great phenolic ripeness while retaining acidity. With no significant heat spikes, grapes at San Bernabe Vineyard ripened slowly and evenly, leading to excellent fruit quality and a textbook harvest timeline.

## VITICULTURE

San Bernabe Vineyard is in the southern area of the Salinas Valley. When the vineyard was replanted, the rows were oriented at 20 degrees North, in order to mitigate damage to the vines from strong, onshore winds that roar south from Monterey Bay on summer afternoons. These cooling currents are critical to grape quality: by driving down temperatures, they slow grape maturation and aid in developing their complex flavors and balanced ripeness. James Ewart selected just over half of the fruit for this wine from Block 309, which is planted with Pinot Noir clone 115. This clone yields exceptionally small clusters and berries with a dark purple hue. Approximately 41% was from neighboring block 308 planted with clone 777. Clone 777 is known for making dark wine as well as providing for velvety richness and concentrated aromas. Both blocks sit against the hills of the northwest side of the estate, whose soils are dominated by Lockwood Shaly Loam, a soil terrain formed in alluvium and derived from sedimentary rocks, chiefly siliceous shale. Its excellent drainage and low fertility help to develop small berries and dark fruit aromas in the grapes.

## WINEMAKING

Diora's veteran winemaker, James Ewart, and his team, work out of a small-lot winery built in the vineyard in 2013. Grapes were picked in mid-September, blocks 308 and 309 are both in the hillside next to one another, and yet bring different components to the blend. Block 308 was picked around 24 brix for brightness, and fresh cherry aromatics. Block 309 was picked closer to 26 brix providing riper aromatics to the blend. James employs the saignée method, up to 10% for every lot, which refers to the process of bleeding or pulling juice from a tank of red must that is just beginning fermentation and cold soak for up to five days for higher color extraction. Blocks and clones were kept separate and fermented in 10 and 15-ton open top fermenters. These were punched down four times a day for soft tannins extraction until they achieved desired dryness, grapes spent approximately fourteen days in fermenters before being gently pressed to barrels. The winemaking yeast selection for this blend was a rough split between D254, and RC212. D254 helps with extracting color, developing smooth tannins, a longer finish, and enhancing fruit aromas. RC212 helps with structure, brighter fruit, and spiciness. After primary fermentation was completed, the wines underwent a "secondary fermentation" which helps soften and round the palate. Following this the wines were "racked" out of barrels and returned to barrels to continue aging to round out the tannins. The winemaking team tasted the individual lots periodically to ensure quality and selected individual barrels that were racked out of new oak and blended together then put back to 100% once used French oak barrels for further aging.

## BARREL REGIME

Before racking the wine was aged in predominantly French oak (~71% new) for eight months. After racking and blending the wine spent another eight months in 100% once used French Oak. The barrel selection was tight grain François Frères (eight barrels) and Mercurey (five barrels). François Frères barrels fill in the mid palate, enhancing the expression of San Bernabe fruit. Mercurey adds heavier toast aromatics and rounds and softens the tannins.



## TECHNICAL NOTES

Varietal: 100% Pinot Noir

Appellation: San Bernabe Estate Vineyard

Oak: Before racking: 8 months in predominantly French oak (~71% new), after racking 8 months in 100% French oak (1x use)

pH: 3.69

TA: 0.53g/100ml

Alcohol: 14.5% by volume

Cases Produced: 495 (six packs)