

2013 VINTAGE NOTES

BY WINEMAKER MATT COURTNEY

It is no secret that we have had a dry couple of years in the North Coast, and the winter of 2012/2013 was exceptionally dry. The dry soils, combined with an early spring, lead to one of the earliest bud-breaks I have seen in Sonoma. The growing season was characterized by dry, warm conditions, and stayed two to three weeks ahead of normal all the way through harvest. In fact, we started picking grapes in mid-August - the earliest I have ever picked!

Growers do not like too much excitement during the growing season. We prefer very even, uneventful vintages - no heat spikes, no cold spikes, no storms that come too late or too early, no surprises. The more even, moderate, predictable the weather, the happier we are. In a way, the more boring the growing season, the more exciting the wines. And apart from the earliness of the year, we had a very predictable season with excellent, even ripening across all regions of the North Coast in 2013.

Exceptionally even ripening allowed us to pick in a very precise manner. Every block in every vineyard was picked exactly when we wanted. The result is impeccably balanced wines that have energy, density, polish, and elegance. These are not simple quaffers that will fade in a few years' time. These are nuanced, tightly knit wines that are packed with complexity and are built to last.



ARISTA
WINERY

7015 Westside Road
Healdsburg, CA 95448
AristaWinery.com



2013 RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY CHARDONNAY

The 2013 Russian River Valley Chardonnay combines a rich, broad palate of toasted brioche, lemon butter, and grilled peach with a balancing structural component of flint and wet rocks. As it opens in the glass, notes of lemon oil and chamomile add a layer of complexity. The wine has great tension, with medium+ acidity supporting a long finish.

Peak drinking window: 2016 through 2026.



2013 BANFIELD VINEYARD CHARDONNAY,

The Chardonnay blocks in Banfield Vineyard are some of the coolest sites we work with. The vineyard sits in a protected pocket of the Russian River Valley that collects cool air in the mornings and warms up slowly only when the morning sun peeks over the surrounding hills. This unique microclimate is expressed quite transparently in the wine with delicate, sweet floral notes prevailing on the nose, and an elegance, lightness, and minerality driving the palate. Aromas of lime curd, orange blossom, wet granite, and baking spices emanate from the glass. The wine is silky on the mid-palate, with notes of pear skin, spiced pear, and lemon oil carrying the long finish.

Peak drinking window: 2015 through 2025.



2013 RITCHIE VINEYARD CHARDONNAY

The 2013 Ritchie Vineyard Chardonnay is a rich, layered wine which showcases the quality of this California Grand Cru vineyard. On the nose, the wine displays aromas of wet granite, brioche, vanilla bean, lemon oil, and baking spices. On the palate, the wine is pure silk, with notes of honeydew melon, lemon butter, mango, and panna cotta. This Chardonnay has incredible density, intensity, and length, with layers of flavors unfolding on the palate for a full minute.

Peak drinking window: 2015 through 2025.



2013 RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY PINOT NOIR

The 2013 Russian River Valley Pinot noir shows a classic Pinot nose of forest floor and ripe raspberry immediately upon pulling the cork. As it opens up, a cola note, and aromas blue and black fruits add to the expressive nose. On the palate, the wine's firm acidity anchors flavors of ripe raspberry, cranberry, and strawberry, which are accompanied by a gravelly minerality. The wine has a richness and meaty-ness that melds seamlessly with the ripe berry component.

Peak drinking window: 2015 through 2023.



2013 ANDERSON VALLEY PINOT NOIR

The 2013 Anderson Valley Pinot noir is a vibrant ruby-colored wine that is an explosive expression of fresh berries on the palate with an accompaniment of cola and sweet spice on the nose. Notes of clove, black pepper, and raspberry liqueur unfold in the glass over time. The bright acid backbone, a hallmark of the Anderson Valley, supports a long and intense finish of freshly picked wild raspberries.

Peak drinking window: 2016 through 2026.



2013 MENDOCINO RIDGE PINOT NOIR

The 2013 Mendocino Ridge Pinot noir is a dark and complex expression of this high elevation appellation on the border of Sonoma and Mendocino counties. The nose has an organic quality, with damp soil, Herbes de Provence, cinnamon stick, espresso, and spiced apples. The high elevation of this appellation reveals itself on the palate with a tangy acidity and pleasantly grippy tannins. Flavors of black cherry and strawberry soda emerge as the wine opens up.

Peak drinking window: 2015 through 2023.



2013 LONGBOW PINOT NOIR

Our Longbow bottling is a barrel selection from our favorite Russian River Pinot noir lots of the vintage. 2013 was such a superb growing season in the Russian River Valley, that this wine was bound to be great. Boasting bright acidity and a barely perceptible touch of toasty oak, the 2013 Longbow exudes classic Russian River Pinot characteristics of freshly crushed raspberries, and wild strawberries. More complex aromas and flavors of cranberry sauce, grilled tri-tip, and a savory ginger note begin to emerge as the wine opens up in the glass.

Peak drinking window: 2016 through 2025.



2013 FERRINGTON VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

The 2013 Ferrington Vineyard Pinot Noir is dark and intense, both visually and on the palate. A nose of brambly wild berry, forest floor, black pepper, graphite, and blackberry preserves is complemented by flavors of black plum, pomegranate, and espresso. The mid-palate is silky and rich, leading into a long, layered finish. With time in the glass, secondary aromas of ground cinnamon, cedar, and Griotte Cherry begin to emerge. Pleasantly chewy tannins, and tangy acid provide the structure for this Pinot Noir from one of the most historic vineyards in the famously cool Anderson Valley.

Peak drinking window: 2015 through 2025.



2013 MONONI VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

The 2013 Mononi Vineyard Pinot noir is an elegant wine, possessing a beautiful aroma of roses and red fruits. The floral character of the nose evolves into brambly wild cherry and crisped bacon. On the palate, the wine is energetic with mouth-watering acidity and a mineral, oyster shell quality. On the finish, rounded, mouth-filling tannins marry with flavors of pomegranate, Griotte Cherry, and wonderfully complex notes of braised meats, roasted mirepoix, and lavender.

Peak drinking window: 2016 through 2026.



2013 PERLI VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

An exotic nose of forest floor, wild berry, black cherry, and mahogany emanates from the glass with the 2013 Perli Vineyard Pinot Noir. Savory, mouth-filling tannins and tangy acidity typical of this remote site on the Mendocino coast provide ample structure for flavors of blackberry reduction, cola, graphite, black plum, and Asian spice. This dark and complex Pinot continues to unfold on the palate over the course of a full minute.

Peak drinking window: 2015 through 2025.



2013 TOBONI VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

The profile of the 2013 Toboni Vineyard Pinot noir is classic Russian River Valley. The nose is full of sweet spice and raspberry based aromas. Notes of cocoa powder, bacon, fresh raspberries, and fig come in waves as this complex and tightly knit wine opens up over many minutes and even hours. More complex aromas of raspberry coulis, roast duck, grilled pancetta, and ginger snap begin to develop with time in the glass. The finish is long and persistent with a mouth-watering nose of cinnamon bun, graham cracker, and violets rewarding the taster who allows the wine time to fully open up in the glass.

Peak drinking window: 2016 through 2026.



2013 U.V. LUCKY WELL VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

The 2013 UV Lucky Well Pinot Noir is a vibrant expression of Pinot Noir from the ridge that separates the Sonoma Coast from the Russian River Valley. Not surprisingly, the wines from this ridge tend to have qualities that are typical of both the coast and the Russian River Valley: intense, bright, wild berry notes brought about by the cooling influence of the Pacific, and a broad, rich silkiness and complexity characteristic of the interior valley. This wine is no exception. Notes of spiced cherry compote, caramelized sugar and orange zest adorn the nose of this tightly knit wine. The palate is rich and dense, and is balanced by tangy acidity and firm tannins. Flavors of fresh Burlat cherries and wild blackberries mingle with an earthy note of crushed granite for a full minute on the finish.

Drink 2016 through 2026.

2013 HARPER'S REST ESTATE VINEYARD PINOT NOIR



The 2013 Harper's Rest Estate Pinot Noir is a benchmark example of the 2013 vintage in that it juxtaposes layers of ripe blue and black fruits with a captivating savory richness. Explosive wild berry notes mingle with toasty oak, cherry compote, and bay leaf. On the palate, the wine is deep and velvety, with umami base notes giving the wine an added dimension of richness. The wine continues to open up for hours, and patience is rewarded with notes of crushed wild cherry, raspberry liqueur, polished tannins and an ample, yet well-integrated acid backbone ensure this wine will evolve gracefully for years to come.

Peak drinking window: 2016 through 2031.

2013 TWO BIRDS ESTATE VINEYARD PINOT NOIR



The 2013 Two Birds Estate Pinot Noir is a prodigious wine from a classic vintage. The wine is a dark garnet color, and exudes aromas of raspberry preserves, pine, rose hips, mahogany, and anise. On the palate, elderberry, black cherry, and wild berry flavors are supported by firm, ripe tannins and a savory, mineral texture. Dense, complex, intense, and structured, Two Birds is drinking well now, but will benefit from additional aging in a cool cellar.

Peak drinking window: 2016 through 2031.



2013 SMOKEY RIDGE VINEYARD ZINFANDEL



The 2013 Smokey Ridge Zinfandel is a dark and layered wine that marries an abundance of black fruit and spice with mouth-filling tannins. Black cherry, blackberry reduction, and fresh blueberries are juxtaposed with notes of spiced meat, smoked ribs, molasses, and barbecue. The hillside location of this vineyard, and the addition of a touch of Petite Sirah, lend the wine the firm structure and grippy tannins that support the copious amount of dark fruit that persists through a minute-long finish.

Drink 2016 through 2026.

2013 BANFIELD VINEYARD ZINFANDEL



The 2013 Banfield Vineyard Zinfandel is a stunning Zinfandel made from one of the oldest vineyards in the Western hemisphere. These beautiful 140-year-old vines produce an incredibly complex and effortlessly well-balanced wine.

Immediately, notes of blackberry preserves, cinnamon, gingerbread, and black cherry reduction leap from the glass. With air, these notes are joined by a progression of fleeting fragrances including lemon verbena, nutmeg, and caramel. On the palate, the wine is vibrant with tangy wild berry, black plum, cacao nibs, espresso bean, black currant, and tart cherry. The impressive concentration of this wine is carried by a stout acid backbone for a minute-long finish.

Drink 2015 through 2025.



2013 FERRINGTON VINEYARD GEWÜRZTRAMINER



The 2013 Ferrington Vineyard Gewurztraminer is a rich, layered wine that is at the same time unctuous and lively on the palate. The traditional Alsatian descriptors of ripe pear, lychee, and melon burst from the glass in this very expressive wine. On the palate, the wine is dense yet balanced, with a cleansing acidity carrying flavors of white peach nectar, limeade, and panna cotta. An earthy, mineral note adds a layer of complexity, and rounds out a long, supple finish. Enjoy this wine now and over the next 3-4 years.

2013 ROSÉ OF PINOT NOIR



Lovers of grower-producer rosé Champagne will recognize the color and flavor profile of the 2013 Russian River Valley Rosé of Pinot Noir. Made from 100% Pinot Noir grapes, the wine is brassy-pink in color and is crystal clear. A note of wild strawberries in cream is joined by a hint of freshly turned earth - adding complexity to the bouquet. This is no simple quaffer - close your eyes and smell: you would swear you're drinking full blown Pinot Noir. But on the palate, this rosé is much lighter on its feet than its dark red cousins. Serve this chilled paired with light apps, or as the perfect poolside apéritif.