

2000 Bien Nacido Vineyard Pinot Noir



James Laube, Wine Spectator

"Tart cherry, earth and wild berry flavor turn crisp."

Laurie Daniel, San Jose Mercury News

"Juicy, with bright berry and cherry flavors accented by black pepper."

Dennis Bell, Lewis Cellars

"I'm currently drinking the '99 Testarossa Pinot Noir Bien Nacido Vineyard. It's spicy, supple, balanced and seductive. I had it with dinner—really a smogasboard—an evening picnic of cheeses, breads and sliced meats. It just struck me as delicious Pinot Noir; it's the best '99 Pinot Noir I've ever tasted."



California Central Coast

1999 vintage

91 points

Earthy and lean, this expresses Santa Maria character in a distinctive scent of rose petals and smoke. The fruit lives somewhere between floral and herbal, hovering with light and pretty esters while holding to a depth of flavor. Firm and sweetly ripe, this maintains a brightness and the floral complexity that can make finely sited pinot so compelling and complex.

Wine & Spirits Magazine, October 2001

91 points

Dramatic, showy nose of smoky raspberry tart, vanilla, cinnamon and deeper notes of blackberry preserves lead to wonderfully fruity flavors. Supple, silky and dry, this complex beauty offers lots of hedonistic pleasure.

The Wine Enthusiast, December 2001

2000 BIEN NACIDO VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

Bien Nacido is a very unique property in many respects, but most important is the fact that the vineyard supplies Testarossa with some of our highest quality Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Although Bob and Steve Miller, the owners of Bien Nacido, have planted 885 acres at Bien Nacido, located in Santa Barbara County's Santa Maria Valley, it doesn't mean they sell grapes to just "anyone." It took Rob Jensen countless phone calls back in Testarossa's early days to convince Jeff Wilkes, Bien Nacido's Director of Sales, that we would produce great wines from their fruit. After our trial in 1995 with Bien Nacido Chardonnay, the results impressed Jeff so much that we were able to purchase much more Chardonnay from 1996 on, and we were even sold Pinot Noir in 1997. 1998 was such a small crop for Pinot at the vineyard that Testarossa wasn't able to purchase any, however in 1999 we signed a five-year contract for both Bien Nacido Chardonnay and Pinot Noir.

Situated in a valley that runs east-west, and very close to the Pacific Ocean, Bien Nacido has a very moderate climate all summer, with foggy mornings, bright sunshine from mid-day through the afternoon, and very windy afternoons and early evenings. We feel this is the ideal climate for Pinot Noir, and the spicy aromas of this wine are a testament to this. Pinot Noir is usually one of the earliest ripening varieties planted in California, and in 2000 we harvested the fruit at Bien Nacido on September 15th. This allowed the grapes to ripen slowly and fully, still with perfect balance. The clusters were destemmed and sent to a 2000-gallon tank where they cold-soaked for two days. After the juice picked up the right concentration during the soak, we inoculated with D254 yeast, and it fermented for 12 days. The free run was then sent to French oak barrels for 14 months of aging during which time it was racked only two times, once in the spring of 2001 and once in early January 2002, just before bottling. (EK)

VINEYARD:

Appellation: Santa Maria Valley
(Santa Barbara County)

Owner: Miller Family

Vine Age: 28 years

Acreage (for Testarossa):

Chardonnay, 7 acres, planted in 1973

Pinot Noir, 2 acres, planted in 1973

Yield: 1.5 tons per acre

Soil Composition: Elder series shaley loam

Elevation: 440 feet

Exposure: South/southwest

Climate: Marine influenced, cool summer temperatures ranging from daytime highs in the low 70s to pre-dawn lows in the 50s.

First Testarossa vintage: 1999

HARVEST:

Sugar: 24.6° Brix

Total acidity: 7.7 g/L

pH: 3.30

Date harvested: September 15, 2000

BOTTLE:

Alcohol: 14.7%

Total acidity: 6.5 g/L

pH: 3.58

Bottling date: January 8, 2002

Time in oak: 15 months

Percent new oak: 50%

Production: 506 cases, 750mL

Release date: February 1, 2002

Suggested Retail Price: 750mL \$45.00

Optimum time for consumption: 2002-2006