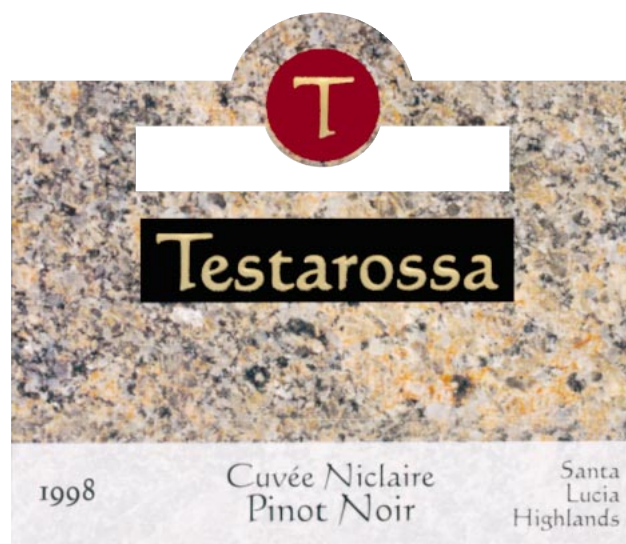


# 1998 Cuvée Nictaire Reserve Pinot Noir



Our second offering of the Cuvée Nictaire Pinot Noir is comprised of barrels from the Pisoni and Sleepy Hollow Vineyards. Each barrel of Pinot Noir produced from the 1998 vintage at Testarossa was tasted and ranked for quality by our production staff. Only the barrels with near-perfect scores were selected to become potential Nictaire barrels. Then, through a series of blind tasting trials, we narrowed down the field to just five barrels. The blend of these barrels was again tasted blind against the “runner up” blends until we unanimously reached the conclusion that our initial instincts were right and that these five barrels made up the best possible cuvée. The name for the wine, Nictaire is a combination of the names Nicholas and Claire, the children of proprietors Rob and Diana Jensen.

Although the Pisoni and Sleepy Hollow Vineyards are only about 15 miles driving distance from each other and are within the same Santa Lucia Highlands appellation, the fruit and resulting wines they produce are very different. The Sleepy Hollow Vineyard lies just a few hundred feet above the Salinas Valley floor and is heavily influenced by the cool breeze, originating from Monterey Bay, which kicks up every summer afternoon. This moderating effect on the vines gives the fruit a unique spicy quality along with substantial weight and structure. The Pisoni Vineyard is higher in elevation and sits in a more sun-exposed area than Sleepy Hollow. The crop is kept very small, both by nature and by crop thinning, and the resulting grapes have a ripeness and intensity rarely seen in California Pinot Noir. By blending the two vineyards together we are combining two distinctive yet complimentary sets of flavors and textures. *(EK)*

**Appellation:** Santa Lucia Highlands  
*(Monterey County)*

**Vineyard:** Pisoni Vineyard  
Sleepy Hollow Vineyard

## **Bottle**

Alcohol: 14.7%

Total acidity: 6.7 g/L

pH: 3.60

Bottling date: November 17, 1999

Time in oak: 12 months

Percent new oak: 50%

Production: 232 six-bottle cases, 750mL  
20 cases, 375mL

Release date: February 1, 2001

Suggested Retail Price: 750mL, \$ 60.

375mL, \$ 30.

Optimum time for consumption: 2001-2008

**Color:** Deep garnet.

**Nose:** Dark, jammy fruits. Cherries, blackberries, plums. Smokey and spicy. Herbs de Provence.

**Palate:** Firm tannins and focused fruit flavors.

Sweet black cherries, ripe blackberries and figs. Velvety, almost chocolaty texture.

Extremely long, fruity finish. Although enjoyable now, this wine will age over the next five to eight years.