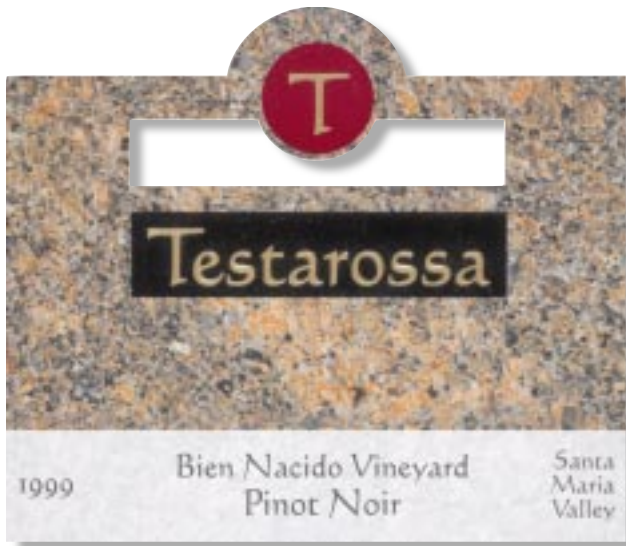


Bien Nacido Vineyard Pinot Noir



Translated from the Spanish Bien Nacido means “well-born”, an apt name for one of the most prestigious and best-known vineyards in the Santa Maria Valley appellation.

Since 1995, and in every vintage thereafter, Testarossa has produced a 90+ rated Chardonnay from this great site, and are now proud to introduce our first vineyard-designated Bien Nacido Pinot Noir. Elegant and complex, this Côte de Beaune-style wine is certain to garner as much praise as its superb sibling.

“When winemakers were asked why they tenaciously hold onto their Bien Nacido contracts, they universally expressed their belief in Bien Nacido as a high quality site for Pinot Noir.”

Connoisseur's Guide

“Vineyards, to wine lovers, are not fields in which fruit is grown to produce wine; they are sacred places worthy of pilgrimage. The holy aura is still felt in such places as Martha's Vineyard, Volcanic Hill or Bien Nacido — sites which traditionally provide extraordinary terroir for the most distinguished bottlings.”

Alan Boehmer

“The coastal vineyards and wineries stretching 100 miles north from Santa Barbara to San Luis Obispo have a comparatively short history that is nonetheless as rich and diverse as their geography...One vineyard, in particular, occupies a special place at the center of all this activity: Bien Nacido Vineyard.”

Wine Spectator



California Central Coast

1999 BIEN NACIDO VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

Bien Nacido is a very unique property in many respects, but most importantly to Testarossa is that the vineyard supplies us with some of our highest quality Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Although owners Bob and Steve Miller have planted 885 acres at Bien Nacido, located in Santa Barbara County's Santa Maria Valley, this does not 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 a trial in 1995 with our first Bien Nacido Chardonnay, the results impressed Jeff so much that we entered into a 5-year contract to purchase more fruit. In 1999 we renewed our contract, adding in Pinot Noir. And although our first vintage yielded small amounts of Pinot, in fact between our rows in block T the Millers have interplanted Dijon clones of Pinot Noir that should start bearing crop in 2002, and which will significantly increase the amount of Pinot we produce from this great vineyard.

The summers are always long and cool at Bien Nacido Vineyard, but 1999 was particularly so. 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 an 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, but in 1999 we harvested the fruit at Bien Nacido on October 11. This allowed the grapes to ripen slowly and fully, still with perfect balance. The clusters were destemmed and sent to one of our 5-ton open top fermenters for a 6-day cold soak. After it had picked up the right concentration during the soak, we inoculated with Assmannshausen yeast, and it fermented for a full two weeks. The free run was then sent to French oak barrels for a year of aging during which time it was racked only once. This wine is one of the most elegant and aromatic Pinots we have produced to date, and our very first vineyard-designated Bien Nacido Vineyard Pinot Noir. (EK)

Color: Medium ruby

Nose: Fresh red cherries, mint, cloves. Warm oak and spice.

Palate: Bright and lively. Rich with strawberry, cherry and red plum flavors. Well-balanced oak and acidity. Finishes with riper berry flavors. Our first Pinot from Bien Nacido, this wine displays the finest elements from this well-regarded vineyard. Drink now and over the next five years.

VINEYARD

Appellation: Santa Maria Valley
(Santa Barbara County)

Owner: Miller Family

Vine Age: 27 years

Acreage (for Testarossa only):
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: Maritime-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: 24.5° Brix

Total acidity: 8.9 g/L

pH: 3.30

Date harvested: October 11, 1999

BOTTLE

Alcohol: 13.9%

Total acidity: 7.85 g/L

pH: 3.62

Bottling date: November 17, 2000

Time in oak: 12 months

Percent new oak: 50%

Production: 296 6-bottle cases, 750mL
50 cases, 375mL

Release date: June 1, 2001

Suggested Retail Price: 750mL, \$ 40.00
375mL, \$ 20.00

Optimum time for consumption: 2001-2005