

Belle Glos

2014 LAS ALTURAS PINOT NOIR SANTA LUCIA HIGHLANDS • MONTEREY COUNTY

MY GOAL WITH EACH OF THE BELLE GLOS, SINGLE-VINEYARD PINOT NOIRS IS TO EXPRESS THE UNIQUENESS OF EACH VINEYARD AND CRAFT A GENUINE STYLE OF CALIFORNIA PINOT NOIR THAT IS LAYERED, COMPLEX, FRUIT-FORWARD AND RICH. OUR LAS ALTURAS VINEYARD IS AN IDEAL LOCATION FOR GROWING SUCH A ROBUST, OPULENT AND FULL-FLAVORED STYLE OF PINOT NOIR.



JOSEPH WAGNER, OWNER & WINEMAKER

THE VINEYARD

The Spanish term 'Las Alturas' means 'the heights', a fitting name for this vineyard located on one of the highest grape-growing benches in the Santa Lucia Highlands AVA. At this elevation, the sunny but very cool climate creates a wine bearing all the hallmarks of this coastal region: robust, expressive, full bodied and balanced by a firm acidity. Nestled between the Santa Lucia Mountains and the western side of Salinas Valley, Las Alturas benefits from early morning fog which rolls in most days from Monterey Bay then burns off within a few hours. Gusty winds funnel in from the bay throughout the afternoon, moderating the overall temperature and contributing to one of the longest growing seasons in California. The high winds also result in smaller berries with very thick skins, giving us more color concentration. Another attractive characteristic of this vineyard is the low-vigor, free-draining sub-soil made up of a calcareous base underneath a layer of sandy loam. This complements our farming techniques to further reduce our yields per vine and augment the fruit's intensity.

THE 2014 GROWING SEASON

The 2014 vintage across the great state of California was one of the best in decades. Veraison started early and went fast. Consistently warmer day and night temperatures, along with lots of sunshine, led to harvest in Monterey County starting four weeks early. These growing conditions, along with the drought which kept the crop yield low, aligned to produce fruit of exceptional quality.

WINEMAKING

We harvested early in the morning so the fruit would arrive at the winery while the grapes were still cool to preserve the vineyard-fresh flavors. After de-stemming but not crushing the berries, we cold-soaked the fruit for up to two weeks to soften the skins and allow for ideal extraction. During fermentation in a combination of closed and open-top stainless steel fermenters, we used both punch-downs and pump-overs to extract color and tannins, and also to control temperatures and maximize flavors. We barreled only the free-run, discarding the press, then aged the wine in 100% French oak (60% new, 40% seasoned) for up to nine months. After racking the wine once malolactic fermentation was complete, we racked it a second time before making the final blend.

TASTING NOTES

Deep ruby red in color with intriguing aromas of sun-warmed blackberries, ripe plums and hints of black licorice. A complexity of dark berry fruits unfolds on the palate, with flavors of blackberry, Bing cherry and dark chocolate predominating. Vanilla and cedar oak undertones on the mid-palate further enhance the wine. The overall impression is rich with refined tannins, firm acidity and explosive layers of ripe fruit.



I named this wine in honor of my grandmother, Lorna Belle Glos Wagner, who inspired and guided me.

SOIL:

Gloria sandy loam

CLIMATE:

Cool, very sunny

GROWING SEASON:

*(bloom to harvest)
April 20 – Oct. 17, 2014*

AVERAGE HIGH TEMP:

77.9°F

ELEVATION:

540-1,210 ft.

RELEASE DATE:

July 2015