

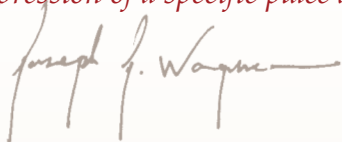
BALADE

BY

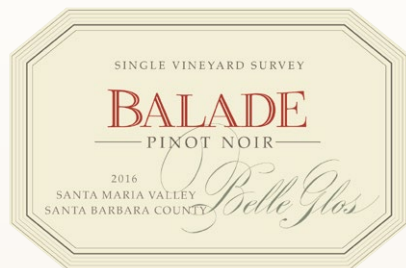
Belle Glos

2016 PINOT NOIR • SANTA MARIA VALLEY • SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

"To me, Balade is the expression of a specific place and a very definitive and memorable moment in time."



- JOSEPH WAGNER, OWNER & WINEMAKER



THE WORD BALADE, FRENCH FOR 'WANDERING', IS A FITTING TERM FOR OUR ANNUAL EXPLORATION OF SINGLE-VINEYARD PINOT NOIR BLOCKS ON THE WEST COAST. EACH VINTAGE, WE WILL BOTTLE ONLY THE MOST COMPELLING AND NUANCED EXPRESSION OF PINOT NOIR FROM A SINGLE SELECTED VINEYARD AND RELEASE IT AS A LIMITED BOTTLING, AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY IN RESTAURANTS.

SINGLE VINEYARD SURVEY

During the 2016 growing season, one vineyard in the coastal Santa Maria Valley captivated us with its lovely fruit flavors, great acidity and undeniable complexity. For us, this vineyard expresses the quintessential qualities of its origin, with small, intensely flavored, dark-berry aromas and flavors.

THE 2016 GROWING SEASON

A winter of below-average rainfall was followed by very warm weather in February which prompted early and rapid growth in the vineyard. After this jump start to the growing season, a blanket of coastal fog rolled in to keep temperatures cool in Santa Barbara during March and April. With cool weather through May, fruit set was slightly smaller than average. We enjoyed a mild and pleasant summer with cooling in August to provide nice hang time for the crop to fully ripen. The weather remained ideal during harvest, which began in mid-September about two weeks earlier than normal.

WINEMAKING

We harvested early in the morning so the fruit would arrive at the winery while the grapes were still cool to preserve their vineyard-fresh flavors. After de-stemming, but not crushing, the berries, we cold-soaked the must for 14 days 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-down and pump-over techniques to extract color and phenolics. We aged the wine in 100% French oak (60% new, 40% seasoned) for up to 12 months. After the wine underwent malolactic fermentation, we racked it twice before bottling.

TASTING NOTES

Bright cherry red with bold, vibrant aromas of blackberry jam, raspberry tart and toasted oak accented by subtle notes of rose petal, violets and cherry cola. This wine is juicy and generous on the palate with baked cherry, fresh strawberry, cranberry and baking spices. Perfectly balanced with bright acidity and a supple mouthfeel. Fine grained tannins provide an authentic textural distinction and structural depth.



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