



HILL FAMILY
E S T A T E

2010 "Stewart Ranch" Pinot Noir

Production: 375 cases

Composition: 100% Pinot Noir

Vineyards: Stewart Ranch

Appellation: Carneros

Elevation: Sea level

Cooperage: 40% new French oak and 60% neutral French oak

Alcohol: 14.2%, TA 0.52, pH 3.67

Release date: April 2012

Release price: \$42.00

The 2010 Hill Family Estate Pinot Noir was picked on Sept 17th, at 24.2 Brix. The season started with a cool wet spring, and late bud break, then a cool summer with fog every day for up to two weeks. So the vines were not happy with a hot spell in late August. Many clusters burnt and had to be cut off, leaving lower crops. Botrytis pressure and increasing bird damage made us decide to harvest at lower sugars, with rain coming in the next day, and leaves already beginning to go. The bright cherry and raspberry fruit typical of this vineyard were coming on, with the nice brown seeds that make softer tannins. Planted with the 115 clone on 101-14, and a 5 x 8 spacing, Stewart is actually on a peninsula in the Estuary, and keeps its leaves in a stoic manner most years, so that the fruit can stay shaded in the middle of the day.

We could tell from the beginning that this would be a more delicate wine than in most years, so after a 3 day cold soak, we inoculated with Assmanhausan, and did minimal cap manipulations, punch down in the morning and after the cap formed and light hand pumpovers in the evening. At 0.3Brix, we ended the pumpovers and just gassed the tank, sealed it, and waited 4 days, then drained and pressed it. Color was fairly light, and malic was 2.51, so we inoculated for Malo-lactic and went to barrel. The wine was not racked, but lees were stirred once a month until it was pulled out of barrel in Jan 2012 for bottling. It was not fined or filtered at bottling, so some sediment may form after a while in the bottle.

Winemaker Alison Doran's Tasting notes:

Pinot Noir grapes are high strung and their character does change with the year. In 2010, the wine is considerably more delicate than it was in 2009. But it still has that true Pinot Noir nose of red cherry, dark roses, and slightly earthy clove-spice. The palate is velvety and almost sweet with its red licorice fruit and "5 spice" flavors. It grows over time after the cork is pulled, so I would expect it to deepen and expand with age.