



2004 PINOT NOIR
GAREY VINEYARD
Appellation: Santa Maria Valley

pH: 3.51
Alcohol by Volume: 14.8%
T.A.: .68
R.S.: 0.06
Malic Acid: 0.15

Produced and Bottled by:
Kenneth Volk Vineyards
www.volkwines.com

Distributed by: Wine Warehouse

2004 PINOT NOIR, GAREY VINEYARD, SANTA MARIA VALLEY

Located at the northern edge of the elevated Santa Maria Mesa, this vineyard was designed and planted in the late 1990's to be the premiere vineyard of the Robert Mondavi Corporation's holdings in the Santa Maria Valley. The Garey Vineyard is named for the tiny township of Garey in the Santa Maria Valley, which it resides adjacent to.

The grapes for this wine came from the west side of Block 316, which is planted to the Dijon Clone 777, and is trellised and trained to a Smart Dyson canopy system. A heat wave in 2004 elevated sugar levels prior to harvest; hand-harvested fruit was crushed and destemmed into 1.5 ton open top fermentors which were layered with copious amounts of dry ice to remove field heat and promote a cold maceration, and the must was then blanketed with CO₂ gas. After two days of cold soak, the juice chemistry was 27.1° Brix, 3.47 pH, and .74 total acidity; despite the Brix levels, the acidity and pH of the juice were excellent.

I do not like to add water to must, a frequent technique for wineries dealing with high Brix yeast; I prefer to use alcohol tolerant yeasts, and to try to evaporate alcohol by open top fermentation. The fermentors were inoculated with Ashmanhausen yeast two days after crushing, and the caps were punched down intensely every six hours for the next four days to promote aeration of the high Brix must. On the fifth day, the fermentation started to take off and the fermentation temperature rose to the high 80°'s; after two weeks on the skins, fermentation began to slow and came close to sticking. I continued punchdowns two times daily and inoculated with Bayanus yeast culture #43, which is fairly tolerant of high alcohol conditions; over the course of the next month, the fermentation proceeded slowly.

Seeking divine inspiration, the wine was pressed on the 42nd day of being on its skins, in homage to the greatest defensive back ever to play football – Ronnie Lott, #42. The must was basket pressed directly into new François Freres and Damy cooperage from the Allier and Tronçais forests. Fermentation slowed to nearly a standstill during the winter, and was completed by April of 2005.

This wine is fairly huge, and is somewhat atypical for Pinot Noir. It has great extract of ripe, red fruits and is surprisingly balanced with good acidity. This black Pinot can be paired with rich and flavorful foods that require a bigger wine style.