

Belle Glos

2009
LAS ALTURAS VINEYARD
SANTA LUCIA HIGHLANDS
MONTEREY COUNTY

Located in one of the highest-plantable sites in the Santa Lucia Highlands of Monterey County, this pristine bench offers the Las Alturas Vineyard cool, coastal days with consistent sunshine and a foundation of Gloria sandy loam soil. The high elevation, up to 1200 feet, and southern locale of Las Alturas Vineyard



is slightly warmer by day and cooler by night with abundant sunshine and less wind than the northern portion of the appellation. All of these favorable conditions work to enhance the phenolic profile of each berry. When planting this vineyard, various Pinot Noir clones and rootstocks were matched to the most fitting soil types and slopes. Yields are deliberately kept low in order to augment the fruit's intensity.

The Santa Lucia Highlands saw a good volume of rain through the winter to begin the 2009 vintage. It gave way to a very normal spring and summer with abundant sun, wind and moderate temperatures. As the season progressed, we saw moderate temperatures lead out to an extremely long growing season, resulting in extreme hang time. That hang time brought with it great phenolic concentration and our last day of harvest was October 19th. The light crop, great concentration and perfect conditions were exactly what we needed to begin the winemaking process.

In the winery, the clusters were de-stemmed and the must underwent a cold soak. Fermentation began with the inoculation of yeast strains matched to each lot of grapes. Our maceration process during fermentation consisted of a combination of punch-down and pump-over techniques, each day the techniques would be reassessed to ensure that we were riding the line between over extraction and under extraction. The wine was aged in 60 percent new French oak for nine months adding a layer of spice and providing elegance and finesse, while preserving the powerful fruit flavors this site offers.

Tasting notes: Dense, dark garnet color. Aromas of juicy dark fruit, moist soil, vanilla and coco burst out of the glass. The palate is so rich that it can almost be chewed on. Flavors of pie filling, plum, cured meats and root beer enliven the senses. This wine has structural integrity with great depth. The balanced acidity leads to a provocatively supple finish.

Joseph J. Wagner
Vineyardist/ Winemaker

Release date: *January 2011*