



2005 *Chris Lee Vineyard* Pinot noir

Just over two acres in a lava ash field were planted by Chris and Chris Lee, a husband and wife team with the goal of producing either stellar Pinot noir, or nothing at all. Greg L had seen the vineyard a couple of years before and, after having made some vine husbandry suggestions, took the challenge in 2005 to coax just a little less than 200 cases from this unique and viticultural-isolated site. Our friend Steve Yafa took a special hand in guiding this wine, overseeing the late vineyard watch, the picking and the fermentation. A portion of this wine also went into his own *Segue* label.

Vineyard: Many of the vines in this vineyard are extremely low-vigor, trying to grow in the volcanic ash in the trough between Sonoma and Bennet mountains. The challenge here is to coax any crop *at all* from the white, chalk-like soil. Shoots don't even grow up to the second trellis wire, and berries are the size of currants, with plenty of sunlight and air moving through the very open, tiny clusters that do appear. The Chris Lee vineyard sits alone in wildly-undulating terrain that exists in a small valley actually above and to the North of the Sonoma Valley, in a narrow vale created by the shoulders of the mountains bearing their famous AVA (American Viticultural Appellation) names. We're pretty sure no one else will be planting nearby, at least any time soon, ensuring that the work the Lees have done will remain unique, and the wine enigmatic in California's Pinot noir profile.

We hope you will enjoy this special, *terroir*-driven wine which is borne of volcanic soil, celebrated in its tending by friends and family and created as a true "tandem" effort between the land and our hands.

Technical Data:

- Harvest: Picked at optimum sugar, acid and tannin ripeness (24.2 Brix, 8.9 g/L acid, rich/dark texture) on September 29, the tiny berries and clusters were only partially destemmed (approximately 12.5% whole cluster), with no crushing. Yield was under 2 tons/acre, with much of the weight going to stems and skins due to the fantastic skin-to-juice ratio. The must (juice and skins) was transferred by gravity to a 4-ton open-top dairy tank, which also has the ability to gently extract flavor with a great surface-to-volume ratio. Hand-plunging was gently applied to this, as all Tandem Pinot noir vats.
- Fermentation: Primary fermentation was a difficult start, with 11 days of cold soak before the native yeast, or more probably due to the length of time, winery-indigenous yeast took off. Primary was cool and slow, but completed dryness shortly after pressing off at around 0.5 Brix (% sugar). Secondary fermentation finished quickly and un-inoculated also, within a month of primary's completion.
- Barrel aging: We used only 12.5% new French oak in the aging of this wine for 11 months in small, 228 L barriques. The selected forests were mostly from Troncias and Allier coopered by Remond and Francois Freres, the majority of which were once- and twice used for Chardonnay fermentation.
- Final bottling technical information of **211 cases** of this unfined and unfiltered Pinot noir:
 - pH: 3.52
 - TA: 6.7g/L
 - 14.9% alcohol
 - Residual sugar: 0.12% (very, very dry)
 - Appellation: Sonoma Valley
 - Calif Retail Price: \$60 / btl