

2016 **ARIL** “Pinot Hill Vineyard” Pinot Noir



ARIL is a boutique, family owned winery founded in 2008 by Harmon & Joanne Brown. Originally, they were inspired to produce small lot fine wines sourced from their Napa Valley home and vineyard which included a 130 year old pomegranate tree amongst the vines.

In fact, “*aril*” is the seed of the pomegranate fruit which represents that original inspiration. Beginning in 2013, renowned winemaker Ehren Jordan took the reins as our head winemaker, viticulturist, and general manager. Together, **ARIL** has added limited offerings from celebrated vineyards in Napa and Sonoma Counties. Throughout, we have maintained a simple philosophy of procuring optimal grapes and respecting them in the winery.

Ideal sites and exceptional farming are followed by a minimalist approach in the winery showcasing place, balance, and elegance.

Winemaking Notes

100% Pinot Noir (*Elite clone - proprietary cuttings brought directly from Domaine de la Romanée-Conti*)

Naturally fermented by native yeasts, with no additions, and 35% whole cluster.

75% neutral/25% new French oak (*François Frères & Remond barrels*)

Approximately 12 months in barrel.

250 Cases

Produced Alc.: 13.6%

pH: 3.46/6.7 TA

Winemaker/Viticulturist: Ehren Jordan

Vineyard Notes

Planted in 2008, Pinot Hill (owned by Emeritus) is a dynamic, steep vineyard with 1' to 4' of *Goldridge Sandy Loam* soil and an underlying foundation of *Los Osos Clay*. It lies within the Sebastopol Hills area of the Sonoma Coast AVA, at the Northern edge of the Wind Gap area, where the fog first penetrates inland from the Pacific and the last place it burns off in the afternoons. We speak of “cool climate” in reference to Pinot Noir in California, and the highest recorded temperature on Pinot Hill since planted is 78°F! Cooler temperatures lengthen the growing season allowing the grapes to retain acids while also making it difficult for the vines to grow large berries, clusters, and yields. The slopes of this vineyard insure good drainage which is so important for quality Pinot Noir. Pinot Hill is sustainably and dry-farmed. This unique combination of terroir results in a restrained, elegant wine with darker color, spice, and higher acidity.

Vintage

The 2016 harvest was much smaller than projected, common throughout California, but the quality of the fruit was extraordinary. On Pinot Hill, the clusters and berries were quite tiny. Yields at this vineyard were down 60%, but the chemistry coming out of the fields were just incredible with naturally high acidity and balanced sugars. The small berry size and higher skin to juice ratio resulted in a concentrated wine with depth and structure. Another thing that is noteworthy, and makes this harvest stand out compared to the last few, is that there is a lot of berry variation per cluster. This means that one single cluster of grapes can have all different sizes of berries on it with very diverse sugar levels. 2016 Pinots will be very complex and interesting, showing characteristics of both a cool- and warm-year.