

BUTTONWOOD

Using grapes from family friends Art and Sherry Hibbits' vineyard, located on the far west side of the famed Sta. Rita Hills AVA, we sneak a 100% Pinot Noir into our portfolio.

This "Artists Series" Label

Delightful Ambiguities is a watercolor created in 2002. It reminds artist Seyburn Zorthian of jazz and rhythm and dance.

In the Vineyard

The Hibbits Ranch Vineyard is the most western vineyard in the Sta. Rita Hills appellation and an eclectic combination of clones, rootstocks and varieties. The vineyard is small (just about 2 acres), on a rather steep southwest facing hill with challenging soils of chert and clay. It would be impossible to keep clones and rootstocks separate from Hibbits Ranch, as there is quite a mélange. Rootstocks include 101-14, 1103-P, Freedom and own-rooted. The clonal selection boasts 777, 667, 114, 459, 828, swiss clone 2A, Pommard 4 and Sanford & Benedict field selection. This is a field blend that works in harmony!

The Vintage

2013 was a "fast and furious" vintage with little springtime frost pressure and few heat spikes during the growing season. Early morning fogs from the nearby ocean were predictably pushed back to the Pacific by mid-morning, and the vines enjoyed warm and sunny days until the ocean "breeze" kicked in early afternoons to keep the climate cool. A very bountiful vintage, we picked the upper blocks of Hibbits Ranch on September 10th, and the lower on September 19th.

Winemaking

Like the vintage, fermentation was fast! All of the clusters were de-stemmed into small open top fermenters and began a native fermentation after just one day of cold-soak. RC212 yeast was added, and within ten days the wine was dry, the young wine drained to barrel (about 20% new Sirugue French Oak) and the must pressed. Malolactic fermentation was complete by the end of November 2013. A barrel selection was made in June of 2014, after which the wine had its only racking. No fining was deemed necessary, the wine was then cross-flow filtered and bottled in December of 2014. Vegan. 226 cases produced.

Technical specifications: Alcohol: 13.9%, pH: 3.579 TA: 6.2 grams/liter

Tasting Notes

The mild weather conditions in 2013 produced a bountiful crop that resulted in a more delicate profile than usual from the stellar Sta. Rita Hills appellation. Vibrant floral aromas of rose petal, red berries and mineral scents of the ocean mingle with a hint of cola. Soft on the palate, with reminders of black raspberry, allspice and cherry compote and a pleasing finish with bright, food-friendly acidity and soft, mellow tannins.

(92 points, International Wine Cellar/Vinous)

Pairing idea

Art Hibbits is also a fisherman, and when he brings back salmon from Alaska – that's the perfect pairing. Lightly poached or cedar planked, simply seasoned with fresh ground pepper.

