



2020 PINOT NOIR

KESSLER-HAAK

STA. RITA HILLS

TASTING NOTE:

Like most of our vineyards, Kessler-Haak benefits from the constant moderation that the nearby ocean provides. In a hot, sunny vintage like 2020 the wine speaks to that sunshine, while still showing a precise sense of balance. There's a wild botanical fruitiness here, with scents of summer berry patch, a woody nutty note of cherry pit, then lilacs, coriander, and clove. Even with 50% whole clusters, the herbaceousness is fine and filigreed, carried by the powerful fruit. You find a vibrant wash of muddled raspberry and blueberry compote across the palate, then focused edges that are powdered with spicy tannins. There's plenty immediacy, but also all the concentration and structure to age for years.

VINEYARD:

Kessler-Haak is planted in the northern half of the Sta. Rita Hills along Route 246, right next to Clos Pepe Vineyard where we farmed Pinot Noir throughout the early 2000s. The rows we farm include the Dijon clones 114 and 667.

We started making Pinot Noir from Kessler-Haak in 2014, with the intention of foraying into a more radical expression of Pinot Noir fermented with whole clusters (with the grapes left on their stems). A vineyard needs certain attributes to pull off that approach. You need a lot of inherent fruitiness. Stems add complexity, but they can also be sobering to a wine's sense of fruit. You also need fruit that carries a lot of acidity, because stems steep potassium into the must and can raise the pH significantly, putting you at risk of making a dull wine.

When this vineyard came up as a possibility for us, we thought of our old Clos Pepe bottlings. Those wines were brashly fruity and racy in their youth. We decided Kessler-Haak might be just the right vineyard to push the envelope with stem inclusion. It was a good hunch. This wine carries 50% whole-clusters beautifully. There's fine balance and freshness, with all sorts of botanical complexities swaddling the fruit richness.

BLEND 100% Pinot Noir

VINEYARDS Kessler-Haak

AVA Sta. Rita Hills

ALCOHOL 13.0%

VINIFICATION fermented 50% whole cluster

BARREL AGING 18 months in 43% new French oak

TOTAL PRODUCTION 207 Cases

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THE
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