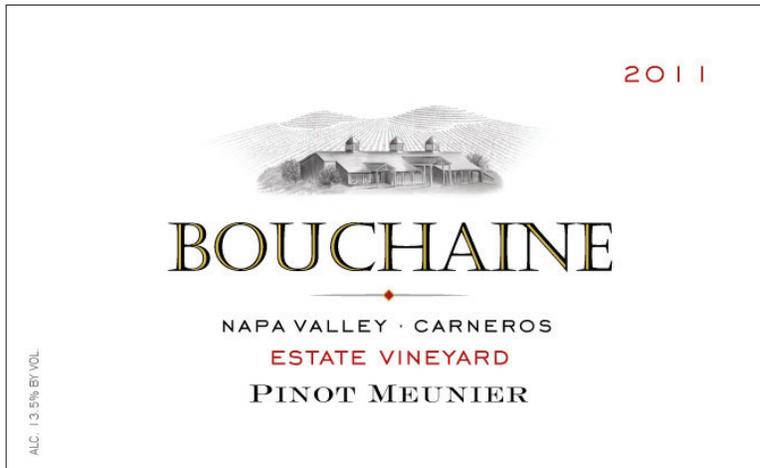


BOUCHAINE

2011 ESTATE VINEYARD PINOT MEUNIER



APPELLATION: Napa Valley - Carneros
MATURATION: 33% new French oak barrels; Complete ML Fermentation
AGING: 11 months
ALCOHOL: 13.85%
BOTTLING DATE: August 7, 2012
PH: 3.53
TA: 6.4 g/L
RS: <0.5 g/L (Dry)
PRODUCTION: 413 cases (750mL)
RETAIL PRICE: \$40/bottle; \$480/case

ABOUT THE VINEYARDS

The Carneros district, long deemed too inclement for fine wine, has become the most renowned cool climate growing area in all of Napa Valley. Bouchaine's 100 acre estate vineyard lies on the southern border of Napa Valley's Carneros district. The Bouchaine signature hills, as depicted on our label, provide a panoramic view of the Napa-Sonoma Marsh with San Francisco and the bay in the distance.

Fog, wind, and the cold nighttime temperatures along with the clay soils of this unique geographical area lend distinctive regional identity to Pinot Noir. Meunier, though recognized in Champagne as a distinct variety, we now know through DNA analysis is but a genetic variant of Pinot Noir. Its flavors could be nothing but Pinot Noir and its growth habits are similar to other Pinot Noir clones.

Due to its resistance to frost we have planted 3 acres in the lowest section of the estate vineyard. Meunier is French for miller and references the whitish cast to the leaves as if they were dusted with flour, a result of a profusion of downy fibers on the underside of the leaves. Rarely bottled as a dry red wine.

GROWING SEASON

The 2011 growing season proved long and very cool pushing harvest deeper into autumn. The good fortune is that the harvest heat that graces virtually every Napa harvest could not have occurred more opportunely or modestly. Where in 2010 a searing, untimely, early hot spell served to confound Pinot Noir ripening, in 2011 it served to precipitate harvest. Flavors developed nicely in 2011 with overall lower sugar than in typical past vintages and only modest crop levels. This tends to elevate varietal and regional character.

VINIFICATION

Our Meunier is vinified exactly the same as all Bouchaine Pinot Noirs; gently destemmed with roughly 40% intact berries, slow start up with a proven yeast strain, gentle pumpovers, overnight draw down at dryness (5-7 days) with all press wine being set aside. Max fermentation temperature reaches about 85F degrees. The free run wine is then finished in a selection of French oak barrels, 30% of which are new. Bottling occurs in August with approximately 11 months total barrel time. Wines are seldom fined and always sterile filtered for brilliance and confidence. Our vineyards and procedures produce consistently dark, aromatic, flavorful Pinots.

TASTING NOTES

Though the initial impression is of a youthful wine with only modest fruit aromatics, perhaps even a bit olivaceous, it quickly begins to develop a faintly conifer forest aroma that further evolves to cinnamon and allspice, a signature flavor of Carneros Pinot Noir. The dynamics of this wine are fascinating.

At another level it shows the brightness of pomegranate or cranberry fruit with overtones of Satsuma plum followed by a faintly smoky oak component.

Think of this wine as a Pinot Noir with an alluring story.