

CROIX ESTATE

2019 Floodgate Pinot Noir | Starscape Vineyard, Russian River Valley

WAYPOINT

GRAPE VARIETY(S): 100% Pinot Noir

THE VINEYARD(S): Starscape Vineyard, Russian River Valley



We often refer to the location of this vineyard within the Russian River AVA as the *Land of Giants* as so many renowned growers are within the north-middle radius of the AVA, most notably Kistler Vineyards-Trenton, Ritchie Vineyard, Bacigalupi Vineyard, Rochioli Vineyards and Williams Selyem. We continue to source Chardonnay from Starscape Vineyard that makes its way into our regional blended Narrow Gauge Chardonnay. We also could not pass on the opportunity to make a one-time example of Pinot Noir from this vineyard while we awaited new vineyard contracts from alternative sources to come online.

Starscape Vineyard, formerly *Floodgate Vineyard*, is located in the Northern part of Russian River Valley (Mark West Creek) on Trenton-Healdsburg Road on the southern end of an area known as the Middle Reach of the Russian River. The Middle Reach is arguably the most iconic area for Russian River Pinot noir. The Middle Reach sub-region is a north-south stretch on either side of the Russian River between Healdsburg and Forestville. The western boundary is roughly marked by Westside Road and the eastern limit by Eastside Road. The southern boundary extends to the Wohler Bridge of Westside Road and Wohler Road at the junction. Stopping on the bridge in the late-night hours during heavy river runs to experience the power of the river, while consuming local craft beer, is a pure, Russian River experience! Some locals extend the sub-region further south on Westside Road to include Moshin, George and Gary Farrell wineries.

The first to plant Pinot Noir along Westside Road in the Middle Reach was Steve and Helen Bacigalupi in 1964. In 1968, shortly after his father passed away, Joe Rochioli Jr., in deference to his father's wishes, planted Pinot Noir on Westside Road along the western banks of the Russian River. This became the now famous Rochioli East Block of Pinot Noir. West Block followed a year later. In 1973, Davis Bynum built the first winery on Westside Road and vinified Pinot Noir from Joe Rochioli Jr.'s first crop. The 1973 Davis Bynum Rochioli Vineyard Pinot Noir was the first Russian River Valley vineyard-designated wine. Gary Farrell was to establish his own label in 1982 while making wine for Davis Bynum, and that year Joe Rochioli Jr. and his son Tom launched the Rochioli label. The first Rochioli wines were made by Farrell at Davis Bynum. By 1985, Tom had become the full-time winemaker and Rochioli winery was built. In 1989, Williams Selyem Winery moved from their small garage winery in Fulton to a modest facility on the Allen Ranch property on Westside Road across the street from Rochioli. The Middle Reach, and Westside Road in particular, had become the crown jewel for Pinot Noir in the Russian River Valley.

Planted in 1971, the old Martini clone vines are among the oldest known Pinot Noir in Russian River. The effects of annual flooding mark the 50-year-old vines which yield less than a ton an acre. The soil type is Laniger loam, typically found in flood plains, with a Yolo loam over-wash. Which made the opportunity to acquire a two-ton pick all the more attractive.

WINEMAKER'S Record

This is a classic, Russian River Valley Pinot Noir. Fans of Bacigalupi, Rochioli, and Williams Selyem styles will absolutely love what this wine has to offer. Spicy aromas of cinnamon, cardamom, and anise mingle with dark cherry perfume, cola, sweet smoked tobacco leaf, and toasted vanillin. Round, soft, and viscous on the palate, the wine has substantial *glide* featuring dark black cherry, savory caramel, black plum pie, supported with balanced acidity to lift the wine into a harmonious balance of rich and racy. Look for this delicious Pinot to put on more mid-palate weight over the next three years. This is our first and only vintage of this wine we will produce.

BIO & PRODUCTION ESSENTIALS

Kirk P. Venge

Proprietor & Winemaker | Born 1976, Rutherford CA
Owner of Croix Estate & Venge Vineyards & Winery

Pinot Noir Clone 777

Method | 90% *Pellenc* Destemmed, 10% Wholecluster, 5 Day Cold Soak, 100% Carbonic Native Inoculation Open Top Fermentation, Hand Punch Down Cap Submersion
Aging Regimen | 45% New French Oak
Aging | 16 Months
Production | 5 Barrels
Clarifying | Barrel To Tank, Bottled Unfiltered