



## **HARVEST 2007: "PRACTICALLY PERFECT IN EVERY WAY"**

**Sebastopol, CA** — Harvest 2007 was picture perfect in our vineyards. It started early, delivered a heat spike to ripen the fruit just when we needed it, then cooled down nicely to allow us to pick at a leisurely pace, and in the end gave us exceptional fruit. In the 17 years since I planted our first vines, I have never seen a harvest where the fruit in every single block of the vineyard looked so good!

There were other firsts, too: We harvested our "House Block" after a full season of farming it biodynamically. The fruit was the first to ripen of all our vineyard blocks – and it looks fabulous. We also used a new crusher for Pinot Noir that enabled us to break the skins and release the juice while keeping most of the berries whole. As in the past couple of years, the fruit was 100% de-stemmed, which we feel better captures its classic fragrance and makes for more expressive wines.

The 2007 growing season was practically made-to-order with a cool spring and little frost – ideal for grape flowering and fruit set – and a moderate summer with few really hot days. At times, it almost seemed like the fruit wasn't going to ripen. Then in late August, temperatures suddenly soared to the high 80s and low 90s. Quite a few of our Pinot Noir blocks in the Don Miguel Vineyard achieved ideal ripeness, so we started picking them September 1 – a textbook time to begin.

Mother Nature is rarely predictable, so it was fitting that on September 7 the weather quickly turned cooler; for the next 19 days, temperatures remained in an ideal range for picking. This allowed us to harvest at a leisurely pace, bringing in cool grapes as each parcel reached optimum ripeness. Our Pinot Noir harvest at the Don Miguel Vineyard, in Russian River's Green Valley, ended September 24.

In the meantime, the Chardonnay blocks were also getting ripe; we started harvesting them on September 9 and finished on the 20<sup>th</sup>. In our younger Doña Margarita Vineyard, only six miles from the ocean in Sonoma Coast and with cooler temperatures, we didn't start picking our 12 acres of Pinot Noir until September 26. But warm weather (in the mid to high 80s) continued on and pushed all the fruit into the ripe zone, so we scurried to finish picking by October 2.

Tonnage was way down from last year. With yields of 2.79 pounds/vine, we picked 74 tons of Pinot Noir in the Don Miguel Vineyard, or about 4,400 cases – down from 6,300 cases last year. In the Doña Margarita Vineyard, average yields of 2.34 pounds/vine gave us 26 tons or about 1,000 cases. The Chardonnay crop was also below normal, with yields of 3.84 pounds/vine, from which we will produce some 5,100 cases. The fruit came in at an average of 23.5 degrees Brix, an ideal benchmark.

Our last day of harvest was October 5 – when we picked nearly two tons of Syrah and one third of a ton of Tempranillo! With Brix readings of 24.1 for Syrah and 24.6 for Tempranillo, the fruit looked and tasted fabulous – we're all excited about producing some 130 cases of it.

Fermentations are going beautifully. The Chardonnays are going through malolactic, with the **Acero** settling into a long cold fermentation in stainless steel. Pinot Noirs are in various stages now, and early assessments of quality are very favorable, with lots of flavor and aroma intensity reflecting excellent seasonal conditions for our cool weather varieties. Although we will produce less than usual, the quality of our 2007 wines should be stellar!

Marimar Torres  
Winegrower/ Proprietor

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2007 HARVEST



PICKING CHARDONNAY AT THE DON MIGUEL VINEYARD UNDER CLEAR SKIES.



PERFECT CLUSTERS OF PINOT NOIR AT THE DON MIGUEL VINEYARD.



HARVESTING PINOT NOIR AT THE DOÑA MARGARITA VINEYARD, WITH THE PICTURESQUE BACKGROUND OF THE REDWOOD FORESTS AND THE MARIMAR ESTATE STABLES.



AFTER SELECTING THE FRUIT ON THE SORTING TABLE, OUR NEW CRUSHER ENABLED US TO BREAK THE SKINS AND RELEASE THE JUICE WHILE KEEPING MOST OF THE BERRIES WHOLE.