

TASTING NOTE

PINOT NOIR 2006



The growing season was longer than usual as mild, spring weather resulted in early bud-burst, but was followed by cool nights which prevented excessively rapid growth. We had good accumulation of summer heat and a long, dry autumn. Harvest was, as usual, in April. The fruit was beautifully physiologically ripe when picked, but yet had good levels of natural acid without excessive concentration of sugar.

In making this wine we have employed traditional Burgundian techniques. After picking the fruit was put into open top vats, our aim being to retain the individual berries whole, we also include about 10% whole bunches. The vats were kept cool for 4 or 5 days and then allowed to gradually warm. At this stage primary fermentation commenced by the action of the grapes' own yeasts and we started by hand plunging the floating cap of grapes to keep it moist and healthy twice daily. This was carried out very gently to avoid excessive extraction of rough tannins and it was continued throughout the 6 days of the fermentation phase. After this there followed a period of post-fermentation maceration, during which we pushed down the floating cap of skins once per day with our hands. The total time in vat or *cuvaison*, varied from batch to batch but was in the order of 3-4 weeks. The time of pressing for each vat was decided by daily tasting to assess to tannins. The new wine was then put into barriques, 30% new, of French artisan coopers.

When the winery warmed in the summer after harvest, the wine in these barriques underwent spontaneous secondary or malo-lactic fermentation by the action of their own natural indigenous micro-organisms. It remained in barriques for a total of 18 months. The multiple individual batches were then tasted and the final blend or *assemblage* made prior to bottling.

The wine has a vibrant carmine hue. Its aromas and flavours are a complex interplay of fruity and savoury elements, suggesting cherries, raspberries and blackberries, intermingled with roast game, grilled mushrooms, black olives, liquorice and coffee. There is a dense core of fruit in the mouth that is supported by a backbone of firm, ripe tannins which flow evenly through the palate and should help the wine age gracefully. While ready to drink on release it will develop additional fascinating nuances and become increasingly mellow with careful cellaring.

Wine is a natural health food