



## ALPHA OMEGA

Dear Friends,

Happy 2014 from the Alpha Omega Team! In this shipment, we thought it would be interesting for you to taste the difference between a Napa Valley Pinot Noir and a Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir. We nicknamed this shipment "The Battle of the Appellations." It is not for me to tell you which wine is better, but solely for you to decide which style you prefer.

Because Pinot Noir is a sensitive grape with thin skin and fragile aromas, it is extremely important to pick at the right time and to precisely manage the growing season. Early in my career, I made Pinot Noir in Switzerland and did a lot of my studies with this varietal because it thrives in cooler sites. Both Pinot Noirs in this shipment have the same clones, 777 and 115, and the same oak and aging. Therefore, this is a great representation of the two different appellations.

The vineyard for the Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir is located on a western hillside of the appellation, on a vineyard named Apex, which is owned by Francioni Vineyard. Despite the reputation of Santa Lucia Highlands being colder than Napa, it is a well-drained site with a southwestern exposure giving the Pinot Noir grapes a jammy ripeness that translates into blue and black fruit notes in the wine.

The Napa Valley is not traditionally the land of Pinot Noir because of its excessive heat during the growing season, which can burn the acidity and aromatics of the fragile Pinot Noir berries. There are very few sites in Napa Valley that make great Pinot Noirs, and they are always in colder areas, usually closer to the bay as the water acts like an air conditioning system protecting the aromatics and acidity. The Napa Valley Pinot Noir comes from Toyon Vineyard, near the intersection of Highways 121 and 29. Over the last five years, it has become one of my favorite sites for both Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Even though it is in Napa, I consider it a cold site. This translates into wines with higher acidity and fresher, red fruit flavors and aromas, along with a density that makes it a very structured Pinot Noir. I hope you enjoy the different personalities of these two wines.

Santé,

Jean Hoefliger, *Winemaker / General Manager*



## ALPHA OMEGA

Dear Friends,

As promised, we have published our 2014 Wine Club events for you to review and to start making plans to visit us.

Details on these events can be found on our website in the Wine Club section. No login is required and it is never too early to RSVP.

January	25	Burgundy Party
February	8	Truffle Dinner
March	8	Spring Release Party
April	26	ERA Party
May	17	Sauvignon Blanc & Oysters
June	22	Summer Solstice Luncheon
July	20	Sliders & Cabernet
August	16	Lobster Dinner
August	17	Lobster Lunch
September	20	Farm to Table Dinner
October	4	Harvest Party #1
October	5	Harvest Party #2
October	11	Harvest Party #3
October	12	Harvest Party #4
October	18	Harvest Party #5
October	25	Harvest Dinner
November	15	Single Vineyard Party
December	14	Sneak Preview Party

Best regards,

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# ALPHA OMEGA

## PINOT NOIR

Santa Lucia Highlands  
2012

*Color:* deep dark black cherry with purple on the rim

*On the nose:* nice notes of cedar, clay, violet and roses balanced with touches of strawberries and raspberries, lingering on dried herbs and pumpkin seeds

*On the palate:* structured entrance on red fruit with a nice tannic frame, lingering on jammy plums, cherries and fresh quince

## BLEND

100% Pinot Noir

## WINEMAKER NOTES

2012 proved to be a vintage of extremes. This is not because of frost, heat, or rain, but mainly due to the high yield of fruit. The growing season was ideal with no frost, a mild spring, and a very temperate, long growing season. This allowed all varietals to ripen to their optimum condition with significant concentration and complexity. The biggest challenges were to find space to ferment and to manage the tannin structure of the very thick-skinned red vintage. This means that winemakers who simply applied recipes had a challenging year as tannin levels were at twice the average level.

## DRINKABILITY

Now to 15 years



# ALPHA OMEGA

## PINOT NOIR

Napa Valley  
2012

*Color:* bright red cherry with hints of geranium on the rim

*On the nose:* explosion of red raspberries, red currant, strawberries, minerality and slate, lingering on white pepper and cured meat

*On the palate:* soft entrance evolving on cumin, with touches of dried lavender balanced with dark cherries and boysenberries, lingering on red currant with bacon

## BLEND

100% Pinot Noir

## WINEMAKER NOTES

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