

Ceritas

M A Y 2 0 1 4 I S S U E

Dear Friends,

At this bountiful, invigorating time of year, we are excited to reach out to you with something new: our inaugural May wine release. 2014 marks the first year we have had the opportunity to offer an additional release beyond our traditional early spring and fall releases. We are pleased to share with you these three wines from the 2012 vintage: two old favorites, and a new Pinot Noir from a familiar vineyard.

Phoebe and I took the leap into Ceritas in 2005, with \$10,000 we couldn't afford to lose, and an ambitious dream we weren't willing to give up: to make distinctive wine from the coastal ranges of northern California. We intentionally chose the simple model of a husband-wife team with no investors or partners. While risky in certain respects, we believed this construct would give us the latitude to be agile, to work outside the confines of complicated business ownership structures, and to achieve an unfettered flow of work that would translate into our wines.

Nine years down the road, we find ourselves fully immersed in Ceritas, now a viable full-time wine business with 11 wines from outstanding vineyards. We are immensely grateful to each of you and our enthusiastic restaurant partners who have supported Ceritas by appreciating, purchasing and drinking our wines. Your participation reinforces our determination to continue making wines true to our heart: wines that express each vineyard site and every vintage in a balanced, inimitable way.

FIELD INSPIRATIONS

From the outset, we have subscribed to the simple principal that most of the important work occurs in the vineyard. As students of the vineyards, this is where we spend the majority of our time. It is where we feel most inspired, most actualized, most engaged. As we deepen our first-hand knowledge of each site, we rely on the experience of our grower partners, whose vast understanding of their vineyards, their seasons and their history offers invaluable information. This learning allows us to tailor our vineyard practices to each site, each vintage, rather than follow a prescriptive methodology.

2012 CHARLES HEINTZ VINEYARD CHARDONNAY / SONOMA COAST

2012 is our third vintage from this historical site, and we grow increasingly excited with each passing year as our understanding of the site deepens. In 2012, there were no signs of botrytis in the vineyard due to diligent fruit thinning throughout the ripening season. These old vines ripen slowly, yielding Chardonnay of great precision and tension, reflective of the essence of the fruit. Distinctive in its richness and balanced by bright acidity and briny minerality, this Chardonnay demonstrates what this varietal is capable of.

Pure, vibrant aromas of yellow pit fruits, lemon ice and saline minerality, balanced by a deep note of loam. Intense and rich, yet light on its feet; bright and focused, featuring wonderful sugar-acid tension. Very long, expansive finish.

2012 PORTER-BASS VINEYARD PINOT NOIR / SONOMA COAST

We are delighted to offer you our inaugural release of Pinot Noir from Phoebe's family vineyard, a name well known to most Ceritas fans for its revered Chardonnay.

After seven long years of patience, we were rewarded with access to a particularly exciting block of Pinot planted in 2005 within the coldest part of Porter-Bass. The vineyard is farmed biodynamically, with our blocks located on the north facing side, allowing for an extended growing season and more balanced flavors. The shale and fractured sandstone soils here are well suited to Swan and Calera clones from which the wine is made. Moreover, the Pinot block is tightly spaced at 6 feet by 4 feet. This keeps the vines small and allows for concentrated flavors at lower sugar levels.

As Ceritas' youngest Pinot Noir vineyard, the vines yield small clusters - just over seven clusters per pound - of intensely flavored small berries bearing thick skins. 40% whole cluster fermentation balances out tannin extraction, and results in the spiciest Pinot Noir we produce.

Brooding, dark-toned aromas: currant, black cherry and peat, lifted by incense, ginger and lilac. Great depth of black cherry fruit on the palate; very fresh, focused and intense - clearly the black fruit sibling to Porter-Bass Chardonnay - firm, dry finish.

2012 "COSTALINA" PINOT NOIR / SONOMA COAST

Showcasing a broad slice of the Sonoma Coast, "costalina" earns its name as a composition of fruit from vineyards north and south of Jenner, including Escarpa, Hellenthal and Occidental Road. A mixture of Swan, Calera, Mt. Eden and Pommard clones, this wine is fermented with only 15% whole clusters, allowing the fruit to shine. The 2012 vintage was ideally suited to "costalina", yielding pure expression of fruit and acid, with exquisite balance. Very approachable now, but it should reward patience in 3-5 years.

The nose opens with graphite and earth, followed by crisp red fruits - cranberry and raspberry - blood orange, rose petal and baking spices. Bright, high-toned palate entry, firmly structured mid-palate and silky textured finish. Great length.

Thank you for the continued support of our family winery and California wine. Blessings on the beginning of spring. Be well.

John and Phoebe