

## 2011 Sandler Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir

Harvest Dates: 9-22 to 10-8-11

Acid: 6.2 g/L

pH: 3.66

Aging: 14 months in new, 1, 2 and 3 year old French oak

Fermentation: 10% whole cluster, 90% destemmed

Bottling Date: 12-12-12

Alcohol: 14.5%

Cases Produced: 296

The 2011 Sandler Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir is the combination of five vineyards from a cool appellation in a very cold vintage. This was a year that had Pinot growers shaking their heads, wondering why they ever got into farming. From the damp, late spring which led to minuscule crops, through the unseasonably frigid summer and fall, 2011 was not your typical high brix, low acid, California harvest.

Winemakers are always up for a challenge. Sure, we prefer the easy vintages when the wines make themselves, but after six years in a row of later than normal harvests, we had learned to be patient. This paid off in 2011 when the Pinot in the SLH ripened well into October, unusually late for this grape and this region. The longer we waited, the better the flavors developed, with absolutely no chance for overripe fruit. It was just not warm enough.

There are four vineyards in the northern part of the Santa Lucia Highlands that went into this blend: Peterson, Soberanes, Rosella's and Garys'. The lone vineyard from the southern part of the SLH was Sierra Mar. Each vineyard adds its own characteristics to the blend, and the signature Santa Lucia Highlands high-toned, spicy Pinot fruit comes through, even in the 2011 vintage. Anticipated maturity is from 2013 through 2019.

