

Dunstan - Pinot Noir, Durell Vineyard Sonoma Coast

- Special estate bottling from the iconic Durell vineyard
- Beautifully captures the rich, elegant, and full-bodied character for which Durell is known
 - Only 56 cases available in CA wholesale

The Producer

Located where three of Sonoma's finest AVAs converge, Durell Vineyard finds some of its best expressions in the bottlings of estate owner, Dunstan. Dunstan's tiny Ranch House Block is one vineyard's prime spots, where a concentration of volcanic soils and ideal temperatures create highly complex fruit. Winemaker Kenneth Juhasz (Auteur, Pali, Donum Estate, Robert Stemmler), focuses on clonal mix, perfect ripening and barrel fermentation to create rich and elegant wines that speak of their place.

The Dunstan story begins in 2005 when Ellie Phipps Price replanted 8.5 acres of land surrounding her home in the southern part of the iconic Durell Vineyard, which she co-owns with Bill Price. Aptly named the Ranch House Block, Dunstan's site includes 3.5 acres of Wente Chardonnay, and 5 acres of Pinot Noir, where Ellie chose a diversity of clones - Calera, Swan, Dijon and Pommard – to highlight the site's multifaceted character. The block is considered one of the three best in Durell Vineyard for its aspect, soils and climate.

This tiny block is nested in the 160-acre Durell Vineyard, considered one of Sonoma's "Grand Crus" with a history that dates back 40 years. The former ranch land was planted to vine in 1979 by Ed Durell and agriculture specialist Steve Hill, who worked tirelessly to develop it into a world-class vineyard. Within a few years, wines bearing the Durell name, such as Kistler Durell Chardonnay, validated the site's potential. By the 1980s three of Sonoma's best AVAs (Sonoma Valley, Sonoma Coast, and Carneros) were defined and incidentally all span the extraordinary Durell Vineyard.

The particular characteristics of each appellation converge within Durell Vineyard, providing a foundation for outstanding Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Durell benefits from afternoon breezes coming from the Pacific Ocean 30 miles west, as well as moderating effects of San Pablo Bay to the south, just 10 miles away. Sonoma Valley warmth brings full ripeness to Durell fruit. The soils are well draining with a permanence of volcanic ash and marine loam. Striations of Diablo Clay capture moisture and minimize irrigation.

Durell Vineyard has attracted some of Sonoma's finest personalities including Kistler, Chasseur, Chateau St. Jean, DeLoach, Robert Craig, Patz & Hall, Saxon Brown, Lutum, and Three Sticks. Durell Vineyard has been named as one of the top five vineyards in Sonoma County.

Dunstan brought on Kenneth Juhasz as winemaker in 2011. Juhasz dedicates himself to making premium Sonoma Pinot noir and Chardonnay, with an emphasis on full flavor development through farming and a light touch in the cellar.

The Wine

This estate bottling from the iconic Durell Vineyard shows deep, lush fruit as well as a satisfying velvety texture. The high concentration of red volcanic soil gives this wine a backbone, upon which the pretty, ripe, red fruit can shine. Clonal diversity within the Ranch House Block adds complexity, while gentle winemaking (100% destemmed/handsorted) serves to preserve all of the peculiarities of this unique site. All components come together to express the Durell Vineyard's elegance and power while being true to its terroir—the best that the Durell Vineyard has to offer.



Region: Sonoma County

Appellation: Sonoma Coast

Altitude: 400 ft elevation

Soil: Volcanic ash, red stones, marine loam, and Diablo clay striations

Varietal: 100% Pinot noir

Vine age: 11 years old

Planting system: Vertical Shoot Positioning (VSP) with double cordon

Yield: Average 3 tons/acre

Harvest: early October

Production: 430 cases

Vinification: hand-sorted and de-stemmed with a seven day cold soak and extended three week fermentation

Aging: 14 months sur lie in (50% new) French oak barrels

Tasting Notes: The wine is a deep ruby-red with bright aromatics of red raspberry, strawberry preserves, black cherry, and Szechuan peppercorn. On the palate, it is silky, yet firmly textured. A perfect blend of fruit, earth, and spice.

Rating: 93 pts by Rusty Gaffney, Prince of Pinot