



2020 Mays Canyon Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

History and Philosophy

Littorai Wines is a small, family-owned and operated winery producing vineyard designated Chardonnay and Pinot Noir from the true north coast of California: the coastal mountains of Sonoma and Mendocino Counties. Proprietors Heidi and Ted Lemon are lifelong Winemakers. Ted Lemon began his career at the age of 22 by working for four years in the heart of Burgundy and in 1982, was the first American hired to manage a property in Burgundy at Domaine Guy Roulot in Meursault. Where some see technology as the route to great wines, we see farming. We derive our sustainable farming techniques from the fertile cross currents of permaculture, agro-ecology and biodynamics. Our winery is situated on a 30 acre integrated biodynamic farm where we produce as many of the vineyard and farm needs on site as possible. Our Estate produced compost is our “fertilizer” of choice.

Expressed in acreage terms, beginning in 2017:

- 100% of Littorai’s vineyard sources is farmed using only organically certified materials
- 85% is farmed using biodynamic methods (all sites we own or lease and most others)
- 49% is estate production

The goal of winegrowing is to produce the finest wine, and that such wine should be a product of the vineyard, not the cellar.

Vineyard

Mays Canyon is home to the Porter Bass Estate. At 200-400 feet elevation, this site is somewhat unique as it is surrounded by the Russian River on three sides! Skirted by redwood trees, they help keep to form a protective barrier that warms the climate of the vineyard. The Hugo gravelly loam soils also help to capture and retain the heat of the day, offering the vines additional warmth as the fog begins to roll in. Re-planted in 1999, this site has been a vineyard since the late 1800s!

2020 Vintage Information

The 2020 year was yet another tragic year for wildfires in Napa and Sonoma counties. The presence of many weeks of smoke damaged our crops on the Sonoma Coast. We did not produce any Sonoma Coast Pinot Noirs in 2020 except for Mays Canyon Pinot Noir, which was picked before the fires affected the vineyard. We made this decision early, opting to leave the fruit unpicked on the vines. We are in the business of producing world-class wines and that is our commitment to you. 2020 was the first year we have decided not to harvest such a large portion of our production. While initially the crop in 2020 was relatively abundant, the combination of extensive crop drops due to the effects of heat waves and drought, as well as our attempt to accelerate ripening due to the fires, reduced the crop levels dramatically. Additionally, we sorted aggressively at the winery. We declassified much of the fruit from Savoy, Cerise, One Acre, The Return, and Roman into the Les Larmes bottling. All of these efforts paid enormous dividends in the final bottlings of the vineyard designated wines. The path was tortuous, but we are delighted in the results.

Tasting Notes

Mays Canyon shares some of the earthy notes we find in Savoy in 2020 with tones of forest floor and decaying leaves, but the fruit is darker, showing blackberry galette, morello cherry and black licorice. The palate has very good authority with chewy tannin and a wave of acidity which returns in the long, mineral-driven tail. This nimble yet powerful wine would be a great pair with meat and mushrooms...

APPELLATION

Sonoma Coast

SOILS

Hugo gravelly loam underlain by weathered fine-grained sandstone and shale

FARMING

Farmed using certified organic materials and biodynamic methods

VINE AGE

Planted in 1999, this site has been a vineyard since the late 1800s

ACREAGE

3.5 acres of Zinfandel, 6 acres of Pinot Noir of which Littorai receives 2.5 acres

YIELD

1.38 tons per acre in 2020

CLONES

Dijon 777, Swann and 3 proprietary clones

WHOLE CLUSTER

49% in 2020

BARREL AGEING

16 months French Oak, 25% new

PRODUCTION

188 cases

ALCOHOL

13.2% abv

