

# TANTARA

WINERY

May 15, 2009

Greetings from the Santa Maria Valley,

I recently reconnected with my old engineering buddy Carl from Virginia who loves wine (particularly Pinot) but doesn't know much about how it's made. Over the course of a barrel tasting with him at the winery, I poured a bit of "declassified" wine - otherwise known as *wine that didn't make the cut*. Carl sipped from his glass and, looking confused, declared it "really good." He asked why any winery would spend the money on premium grapes from famous vineyards only to select a small fraction of them to put in bottle. Why not throw all of the fruit in to make more wine and reap greater profits?

It's a fair question. But by way of explanation, I asked him to think about a great sculpture. Marble can only be bought in huge, expensive blocks that must be chipped down little by little before the underlying masterpiece can be revealed. In the process of turning raw material into a finished sculpture, a lot of excess marble ends up on the floor. It's still beautiful - it's still pricey! - but it must be removed for the sake of the final product.

So the short answer is that we are very particular about what makes the cut. Sometimes great vineyards make "really good" wine, but our interest is only in making great wine. On the pages that follow you can see Tantara's painful declassification rates, marking the first time this information has ever been divulged on the record.

On another subject, thank goodness for 2007. Since we started twelve years ago this may very well be the best vintage that I have personally experienced. Whereas the 2006 vintage was opulent and gregarious, the 2007 vintage produced wine with a rich core of fruit, yet each wine is subtle and spectacularly nuanced. Quiet and serious at first, in a few moments and after several swirls, the wines' pure and evocative aromas fill the air. There is nice volume on the palate that is refreshing and not overwrought. When the wines begin to blossom, a lovely fruit purity unfolds along with a very clear sense of place.

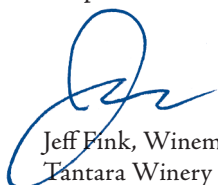
Interestingly, when reading over my notes from the 2007 harvest, I am reminded how many challenges we faced that year and how unsure I was about the resulting wines. At that early stage, I don't think we fully grasped the potential of the vintage. Here's a snippet from my personal notes at the end of 2007:

*The main concern this season was low rainfall - about one-third of normal. Also, very cool weather during flowering in May contributed to a poor fruit-set which further reduced anticipated yields from all our vineyards. Pinot Noir suffered the most: our net Pinot harvest was down 33% from last year. Given the lower yields, the wines from Chardonnay to Pinot to Syrah are all very intense, so I'm hopeful that their concentration will make up for how little there will be available.*

It just goes to show what a dynamic process we're dealing with here. See? Every once in a while, even the winemaker can be pleasantly surprised.

While everything in this spring release is showing exceptional balance, the 2007 Chardonnays are phenomenal. Normally, due to the high natural acidity in the grapes from our cool growing region, it can be difficult for the Chardonnays to complete their natural malolactic fermentations (which give the wines a "creamy" mouthfeel). But in 2007, all the Chardonnays finished their malolactic fermentations at a very low pH. I poured the 07 Bien Nacido Vineyard Chardonnay at a wine dinner several nights ago and was knocked out by its purity, aromas, wonderful flavor, and texture, just like the first time I tasted it from the barrel. I hope you'll be knocked out by it too.

Keep in touch,



Jeff Fink, Winemaker  
Tantara Winery

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## 2007 Bien Nacido Vineyard - Santa Maria Valley Chardonnay

Planted on a south-facing river bench at the base of the Sierra Madre Mountains, Bien Nacido Vineyard's gravel soils underlain with dolomitic limestone contribute to this full-bodied Chardonnay. With a streak of minerality that extends in an elongated finish, this remarkably balanced wine bears notes of Fuji apple, Asian pear, white peach and hibiscus. An excellent candidate for the cellar.

CASE PRODUCTION: 141  
OAK REGIMEN: 20% NEW FRENCH OAK  
ALCOHOL BY VOLUME: 14.3%  
DECLASSIFICATION RATE: 50%  
DRINKING WINDOW: NOW THROUGH 2012

Release Price: \$38.00 / bottle

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## 2007 Talley Vineyard - Arroyo Grande Valley Chardonnay

Planted on rolling hills of sandstone and shallow clay loam just 8 miles from the Pacific Ocean, Talley's Rincon Vineyard delivers wine with mango, white peach and magnolia notes. Whole cluster-pressed and 100% barrel-fermented in 30% new French oak, the 2007 Talley Chardonnay's extreme concentration and crisp acidity integrate seamlessly into the overall flavor profile. Shows lovely symmetry and balance every year.

CASE PRODUCTION: 122  
OAK REGIMEN: 30% NEW FRENCH OAK  
ALCOHOL BY VOLUME: 14.2%  
DECLASSIFICATION RATE: 0%  
DRINKING WINDOW: NOW THROUGH 2012

Release Price: \$38.00 / bottle

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## 2007 Bien Nacido Adobe - Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir

Located at the base of the Sierra Madre Mountains, 20 miles from the coast of the Pacific, these estate plantings comprise four blocks on Bien Nacido Vineyard, each planted to a different clone: 777, 667, 115 and 2A. Beautiful and complex with sweet cigar, cherry and açai berry on the nose, the mid-palate is swept with forest floor and rhubarb and finishes with notes of brown sugar and vanilla. Generous and approachable.

CASE PRODUCTION: 231  
OAK REGIMEN: 40% NEW FRENCH OAK (FRANÇOIS FRÈRES, REMOND, ROUSSEAU)  
ALCOHOL BY VOLUME: 14.4%  
DECLASSIFICATION RATE: 40%  
DRINKING WINDOW: NOW THROUGH 2014

Release Price: \$48.00 / bottle

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## 2007 Solomon Hills Vineyard - Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir

Planted to Garey series sandy loam soils amidst rolling hills and a view of the Pacific Ocean, Solomon Hills Vineyard is on the western border of the Santa Maria Valley and is strongly influenced by coastal breezes. The cool climate delivers spice and firm acidity without overriding this wine's delicacy. Tender aromas of wild strawberry and raspberry, plum, mulberry and rose petals meet with an earthy palate of mushroom, English breakfast tea and candied ginger.

CASE PRODUCTION: 245  
OAK REGIMEN: 30% NEW FRENCH OAK (FRANÇOIS FRÈRES, REMOND, ROUSSEAU)  
ALCOHOL BY VOLUME: 14.6%  
DECLASSIFICATION RATE: 78%  
DRINKING WINDOW: NOW THROUGH 2014

Release Price: \$48.00 / bottle

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## 2007 Dierberg Vineyard - Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir

A brooding, muscular Pinot with density typical to the Dierberg Vineyard, this wine takes about 45 minutes to fully open up with smoky charcoal, beef jerky, strawberry and raspberry aromas appearing first. Orange cream, molasses, espresso, lavender and herbs-de-Provence appear next followed by minerals and pine nuts. The finish has a dark, refined, and gripping texture influenced by the 20% whole-cluster fermentation.

CASE PRODUCTION: 160

OAK REGIMEN: 50% NEW FRENCH OAK (FRANÇOIS FRÈRES, REMOND, ROUSSEAU)

ALCOHOL BY VOLUME: 14.5%

DECLASSIFICATION RATE: 70%

DRINKING WINDOW: SEPTEMBER, 2009 THROUGH 2016

Release Price: \$48.00 / bottle

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## 2007 Rio Vista Vineyard - Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir

Our "Pisoni of the South," this vineyard is painstakingly farmed with perfect pruning and super thin canopies. Due to its location at the warmer end of the Sta. Rita Hills appellation and its heavier clay soils, the Rio Vista Pinot is a rich, opulent wine. Unfolding with plum, black cherry and pomegranate on the nose, it takes time opening up with cocoa powder, smoke and black pepper, then cinnamon, clove and orange peel and finally blueberry, blackberry, almond paste and graham crackers on the finish.

CASE PRODUCTION: 218

OAK REGIMEN: 40% NEW FRENCH OAK (FRANÇOIS FRÈRES, REMOND, ROUSSEAU)

ALCOHOL BY VOLUME: 14.7%

DECLASSIFICATION RATE: 54%

DRINKING WINDOW: NOW THROUGH 2016

Release Price: \$48.00 / bottle

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## 2007 Pisoni Vineyard - Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir

Located in a bowl that protects the vineyard from Monterey Bay's coastal breezes and planted in decomposed granite soils that reflect the heat, Pisoni Vineyard is warmer than other vineyards in its appellation. Meticulously farmed, this vineyard always endows wines with notes of Bing cherries, espresso, dark chocolate and candied orange, as well as a rich, ripe apricot component.

CASE PRODUCTION: 188

OAK REGIMEN: 60% NEW FRENCH OAK (FRANÇOIS FRÈRES, REMOND, TARANSAUD)

ALCOHOL BY VOLUME: 14.6%

DECLASSIFICATION RATE: 50%

DRINKING WINDOW: NOW THROUGH 2016

Release Price: \$65.00 / bottle

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# 2009 Spring Release ORDER FORM

WINE	PRICE	BTL	CASE	TOTAL
2007 Bien Nacido Vineyard - Chardonnay	\$38 / \$456			
2007 Talley Vineyard - Chardonnay	\$38 / \$456			
2007 Bien Nacido Adobe - Pinot Noir	\$48 / \$576			
2007 Solomon Hills Vineyard - Pinot Noir	\$48 / \$576			
2007 Dierberg Vineyard - Pinot Noir	\$48 / \$576			
2007 Rio Vista Vineyard - Pinot Noir	\$48 / \$576			
2007 Pisoni Vineyard - Pinot Noir	\$65 / \$780			

**SHIPPING COST**    **1-6** bottles = \$3.50/btl.    **7-11** bottles = \$3.00/btl.    **12+** bottles = \$2.75/btl.

## Payment

Please check one option:

Check (payable to "Tantara Winery")     VISA, MasterCard, or, AMEX

Subtotal \_\_\_\_\_

Tax (8.75%) CA Residents Only \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping \_\_\_\_\_

Grand Total \_\_\_\_\_

Credit card number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## Billing - NAME & ADDRESS

*Shipping address on right, if different*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

## Shipping - NAME & ADDRESS

*No PO Boxes*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone for above \_\_\_\_\_

Circle one:            Business            Residence

