

Steele PINOT NOIR Carneros [California]

Winemaker's Notes: The core vineyards are Durell and Sangiacomo, both from the cool Carneros (Spanish for Sheep) region of Sonoma County. We received maximum hang time for the grapes and this will translate into wine of greater weight and body. We feel that this wine will be ready to drink upon release but will improve with further bottle age. Very few wineries can produce a wine of this quality in this quantity

Winemaking: Our style for Carneros has always been one of moderate oak, juicy high tone fruit flavors and aromas of black cherry. After fermentation the wine was aged for nine months in a combination of French, Oregon, and Hungarian oak barrels.

Food Pairing: We feel that the Carneros Pinot Noir is a style of wine with great appeal. That has been confirmed by its inclusion in the Wine Spectator's top 100 wines on several occasions. Traditional favorites are lamb, grilled pork loin and salmon, especially those fish caught from the Copper River in Alaska.

MORBIER

The first wheels of Morbier ever produced were made from milk leftover from Gruyere de Comte production. The cheesemaker would press the leftover curd from the evening production of Comte into a mold and cover it with a thin layer of ash to prevent it from both drying out and attracting flies. The next day he would add the leftover morning curd on top of the ash. The result is a two-layered semi-soft cheese with a complex fruity flavor and a slight tang. The two layers of the cheese have slightly different flavors, with the layer from the evening milking tasting fruitier than that from the morning milking. The ash not only separates the two layers of the cheese, it also serves an aesthetic purpose as it makes a dramatic presentation. Morbier is made using raw cow's milk and has a complex, bold flavor. Its yellow-ivory interior has a smooth texture, wrapped inside a creamy-brown crust. The shape is round with sides that bulge slightly ; it has a horizontal black furrow through the middle.

Morbier (meaning "small market-town") is produced in the village of Morez in the Jura mountains. Its creation dates from the 19th century. Its origin was for the personal consumption of the Comte cheesemakers. The cheese is uncooked and pressed, and allowed to mature for two months. It is then brushed with salty water. The production of this cheese is protected by a special label from the Franche-Comte; it belongs to the AOC family.

Texture:

During the maturing period, the cheese develops a natural fine rind. The pale yellow pate is supple and soft when touched, dry and sticky at the same time.

Taste: Its taste is savoury and fruity.