

2000 SLEEPY HOLLOW VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

Since Testarossa's first harvest, we have purchased grapes from California's premier vineyards. In 1997 we received our first load of Pinot Noir from the Sleepy Hollow Vineyard, owned by Robert Talbott of Talbott Winery fame, and also the source of our vineyard-designated Sleepy Hollow Chardonnay.

The vineyard lies on the eastward-facing slopes of the Santa Lucia Highlands, in the Salinas Valley of Monterey County. The climate in this appellation is moderated by the nearby Monterey Bay, which sends fog funneling down the Salinas Valley almost every summer afternoon. The mid-day bright sunshine combined with the afternoon breeze allows for ripening that is always slow and even, and by the time the fruit is ready for harvest, the grapes are bursting with flavor that is undeniably marked with the Highlands' own spiciness.

Although the 2000 growing season was a return to "normal" for most growing regions in California (following three years of unusual weather) the 2000 Sleepy Hollow Vineyard Pinot Noir was a true test for us as winemakers. For the most part the fruit developed beautifully and was harvested under ideal conditions on the first day of Fall 2000. However, there was some uneven ripening in this vineyard, and we noticed the appearance of under-ripe and over-ripe clusters sitting in the same bin with the perfectly ripe clusters. Fortunately, Testarossa is equipped with a sorting table, which we put to good use on the day we harvested the 2000 Sleepy Hollow Pinot Noir. From early morning until well into the evening, we hand-sorted out the imperfect clusters so that only the best fruit went into our fermenters. As a result, our production was cut by 12%, but the wine shows the spicy, dark berry fruit that is the trademark of the Santa Lucia Highlands.

After a weeklong maceration and fermentation, the free-run Pinot Noir was sent to a mixture of 50% new and 50% used French oak barrels. We raked the wine just once in the spring of 2001, then continued to let the wine develop in barrel until January of 2002 when it was bottled. Thanks to the hard work of our staff the 2000 Sleepy Hollow is another great example of what California's premier Pinot Noir appellation has to offer.

VINEYARD:

Sleepy Hollow Vineyard

Appellation: Santa Lucia Highlands
(Monterey County)

Owner: Robert Talbott

Vine Age: 28 years

Acreage (for Testarossa only): 3 acres

Yield: 3 tons/acre

Soil Composition: Gravelly loam

Exposure: East facing slope

Climate: Marine influenced, cool, foggy mornings and evenings; mild, sunny afternoons; highs from the low 70s to upper 80s, lows in the 50s

First Testarossa vintage: 1997

HARVEST:

Sugar: 25.4° Brix

Total acidity: 7.6 g/L

pH: 3.55

Date harvested: September 21, 2000

BOTTLE:

Alcohol: 14.7%

Total acidity: 6.4 g/L

pH: 3.77

Bottling date: January 9, 2002

Time in oak: 15 months

Percent new oak: 50%

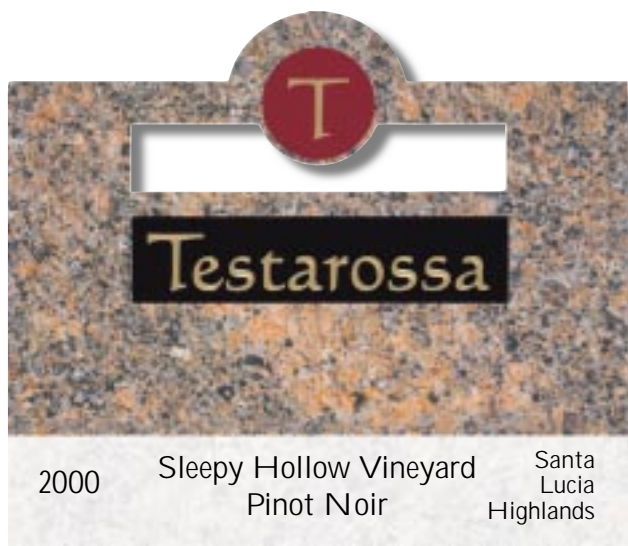
Production: 476 cases, 750mL

Release date: May 1, 2002

Suggested Retail Price: \$45.00

Optimum time for consumption: 2002-2005

2000 Sleepy Hollow Vineyard Pinot Noir



1999 Vintage

★★★★★

Terrific cinnamon-clove-beetroot aromatics and flavor. It's a little tight right now, but great in another six months. About \$45, which is expensive, but it's just as good as some of the new Williams-Selyem pinots that are going for nearly twice that.

Michael Lonsford – August 2001

★★★★★

Sweet, vibrant, loganberry fruit nose. Rich, concentrated, pure fruit with just a hint of tinned strawberries. A very moreish style which is well made.

Decanter Magazine – January 2002

1998 Vintage

94 points

Second highest scoring Pinot Noir of 2001

A great California Pinot, restrained in its youth yet packed with richness and delicious flavor. The wine needs air to go beyond an initial toughness, for the fruit to emerge out of the graham cracker and chocolate-scented tannins, for the full, intense richness of the aroma to resolve. Air brings the fresh fruit forward, wedding to the oak and tannins, like chewing a fresh raspberry into its seeds. The ripe red and black fruit shine through, Pommard-like in its soft richness, structured and distinctive. This is complex and satisfying enough to convert the staunchest cabernet aficionado.

*Wine & Spirits – February 2001
Top 10 Pinots of 2001*

1997 Vintage

92 points

Second highest scoring Pinot Noir of 2001

Deliciously ripe, bold and deeply flavored, with layers of plum, black cherry, blackberry and spice. Long, complex, intricate finish.

*The Wine Spectator – January 2000
Annual Pinot Noir Report*



California Central Coast