

## BAEHNER FOURNIER VINEYARDS

2011 V3

Santa Ynez Valley

50% Cabernet Sauvignon/25% Merlot/25% Petit Verdot from the Baehner-Fournier Estate

Multi-varietal blends have a long tradition in the Bordeaux region of France, where almost all wines produced are the result of three or more varieties. In California, interest in Bordeaux-style blends got underway in the early 80s when a few important Napa Valley wineries recognized that some of the world's longest lived and most complex wines were blends of Cabernet Sauvignon with varying proportions of the other 4 Bordeaux varieties—Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Malbec and Petit Verdot. In Bordeaux, blends exist to hedge against unpredictable weather and provide a degree of stylistic consistency from vintage to vintage. In California, where inclement weather during harvest is less common, blending of the five Bordeaux varieties is a stylistic choice and allows wineries to produce more complex and long lived wines.

Made of 100% estate grown grapes from the Baehner-Fournier Vineyard, our 2011 V3 expresses the sand and gravelly-clay terroir of the 5 ridgeline and radically sloped blocks that comprise the ranch. Planted in soils very similar to those of Bordeaux, the vines are subjected to blustery winds and extremes of temperature that produce small berries and concentrated flavors. Fruit, picked at moderate levels of ripeness, is destemmed and gently crushed to small open top fermenters and, after a 3 day cold-soak, spends an average of 18 days on skins to best extract the intense flavors and aromas that the estate vineyard produces. Aging for 18 months in 33% new French oak and a traditional fining with 2 egg whites per barrel have resulted in a firm and vibrant mouthfeel, with mocha-tinged aromas and flavors.

Sophisticated aromas of coffee and blackberry are complimented by similar flavors of dark fruits and black cherries. On the palate, our 2011 V3 is notable for its noble structure that is a reflection of the cool 2011 vintage. Delicious now, the wine's firm tannins and fresh acid suggest that it will benefit from several years of careful cellaring. Optimum window of enjoyment: 2014 through 2021.

Nick de Luca

Winemaker

189 cases produced