

RHYS VINEYARDS

WINERY - Santa Cruz Mountains, CA
APPELLATIONS - Santa Cruz Mountains;
Anderson Valley
WINEMAKER - Jeff Brinkman
FARMING - Organic; Biodynamic
WEBSITE - www.rhysvineyards.com



Rhys

Vineyards

HISTORY

Kevin Harvey, owner of Rhys Vineyards, never imagined as a beer enthusiast in his youth that he would someday become a vineyard owner. After moving to California at the age of 23 to work in the tech industry, he developed his passion for wine and knew it was the right path for him. Harvey's obsession - in particular, with Pinot Noir - deepened, and he spent the next 15 years studying Pinot Noir while visiting vineyards in New Zealand, Oregon and California. He was intent on proving that the New World can create just as many site-expressive wines as the Old World. Today, Harvey, along with Rhys' talented winemaker Jeff Brinkman and vineyard manager Javier Meza, produces what critics are calling "the best New World Pinot Noirs ever encountered... shockingly close in quality to the finest red Burgundies." (Mike Steinberger, Slate).

VITICULTURE

Rhys' winemaking philosophy starts in the vineyard with an organic/biodynamic approach and maintaining low yields. The team aspires to produce compelling, soil-driven wines from some of California's most unique and expressive vineyards. This pursuit has ultimately resulted in their statewide search for rocky soils that exist within the cool, mountainous coastal climate zone.

❖ Santa Cruz Mountains

One of the wine world's best kept secrets, the Santa Cruz Mountains offer all of the key ingredients for truly fine wine. With approximately 600 acres planted to Pinot Noir in the entire appellation, Santa Cruz Mountain Pinots are also quite rare. Pinot Noir from this region derives its quality from a very unique confluence of climate and geology. The appellation is bordered by two bodies of water – the Pacific Ocean on the west and the San Francisco Bay on the east. This situation creates a cool climate that moderates California's late season heat spikes, producing intense wines with beautiful balance, complexity and minerality.

❖ Anderson Valley

Located over 100 miles north of San Francisco, the wine producing reputation of this beautiful, remote valley has been steadily climbing for decades. The 16 mile long, transverse valley extends from the southeast to the northwest and becomes increasingly cool as it nears the Pacific Ocean. The geology in the valley is quite diverse and includes a band of rocky southwest facing hillsides that produce intense, mineral driven wines of great elegance. Rhys' Bearwallow Vineyard sits in the coolest northwest corner or "Deep End" of the valley where it is planted to 31 acres on the rocky slopes.

VINIFICATION

In the cellar, their hands-off winemaking process is based around native yeast fermentations and a gentle gravity system, which means their wines are never pumped, fined or filtered. This gentle approach is intended to increase complexity and enhance vineyard expression.

"This tiny jewel of a label in an under heralded appellation...seems to prompt nearly spontaneous gushing by any critic within sniffing distance... the full scope of their power and eloquence is recognizable primarily to those who have sampled the very best of Burgundy's grands crus. The wines aren't just great; they're significant."

- "The wonders of Rhys Vineyards" by Jon Bonné, SF Chronicle

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RHYS VINEYARDS

Rhys Chardonnay Horseshoe Ranch

Planted in 2004 with a total of 17.5 acres, Horseshoe Ranch is less than 1/2 mile from Alpine Vineyard, but the two are different in many ways. The ridge between the vineyards protects Horseshoe from some of the direct ocean influence, while allowing for similarly cool temperatures. More importantly, Horseshoe lies on a ridge of sedimentary shale called the Monterey formation, which has made its way to surface over the millenia. This lightweight, brittle rust-mottled shale is prevalent throughout the surface and soil providing for low vigor and outstanding drainage. The wines produced at Horseshoe show unique mineral characteristics that are precise and focused. They offer an almost palpable tension that greatly rewards with aging.

Rhys Pinot Noir Bearwallow Vineyard

While driving northwest on Hwy 128 through the “Deep End” of Anderson Valley, the sight of the steep vineyard-covered hills rising above the redwoods is quite spectacular. Bearwallow sits at 600 feet in elevation and is farmed biodynamically. As with all of Rhys’ wines, vinification is based on a hands-off, gravity-focused approach. Fermentation with native yeasts is followed by aging in high quality, tightly-grained new French oak. The wine is never pumped, fined or filtered.

Rhys Pinot Noir Horseshoe Ranch

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Rhys Pinot Noir San Mateo County

The San Mateo County Pinot Noir is a blend of fruit from their top sites in the area. The wine consists of about 60% Family Farm Vineyard, 30% Horseshoe and 10% Alpine Vineyard. The mountain fruit from Horseshoe and Alpine give this wine its backbone, acidity and spicy undertones, while the Family Farm fruit lends its charming, bright and approachable profile.

