

PAUL HOBBS

2023 CUVÉE AGUSTINA PINOT NOIR

KATHERINE LINDSAY ESTATE, RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY

VINEYARD

- Clonal selections: Calera, Swan, 667, and 115
- Rootstocks: 101-14, 420a, and 3309
- Plant date: 2000
- Soil: Sebastopol sandy loam
- Inclination: rolling terrain with slopes from 2-30%
- Trellis and pruning: bilateral cordon and cane

GROWING SEASON

If one were obliged to condense the '23 growing season to a one-word descriptor, that word would be 'water.' After several years of persistent drought, our vineyard team radically modified farming practices to handle the vigorous growth stimulated by abundant winter rains. Indeed, years like 2023 remind us why it is important to stay nimble and adaptable. By so doing, despite nature's overabundant gift of rainfall, our team's flexibility and skill aided in garnering a standout vintage.

A series of 'atmospheric rivers'—long narrow bands of water vapor in the atmosphere that move concentrated amounts of moisture from the tropics to the poles—in January and March refilled rivers, lakes, and reservoirs to capacity and replenished aquifers while saturating soils. Wet and cool conditions through early April delayed bud break by several weeks, and lower than average temperatures coupled with additional rainfall in May further delayed phenological development. Despite these less-than-ideal conditions, fruit set was remarkably strong for all our varieties.

July brought warmer weather and by late month 'veraison' started in earnest. However, plummeting temperatures in August ushered an atypically thick and persistent marine layer onshore, wetting canopies and causing a significant increase in berry size and weight. To counteract this phenomenon, and to secure good phenolic concentration in the fruit, we performed additional crop thinning across all vineyards. Harvest began September 20—the latest start in over a decade for Paul Hobbs Winery—was well-paced throughout and concluded in early November.

In summary, 2023 is notable for its long, slow physiological development cycle, providing the winery with beautifully balanced, nuanced fruit, rendering bright, energetic wines of good structure, length, and elegance.

HARVEST

- Hand-harvested at night, shears only
- September 23-October 4

WINEMAKING

- Varietal composition: 100% pinot noir
- Hand-sorted while still cold from the field; 11% whole cluster inclusion
- Indigenous yeast fermentation
- 5-day cold soak, 17-day maceration
- Gentle punchdowns
- Spontaneous malolactic fermentation in barrel
- Aged 15 months in French oak barrels; 58% new
- Bottled unfiltered and unfiltered; January 2025

TASTING NOTES

Deep ruby with a brilliant red-purple edge, this wine unfolds with ripe cherry, cranberry, and tangerine zest, accentuated by violet, rose hip, and a touch of black tea. Silky yet powerful, its satiny texture carries notes of iron, red clay, and black pepper, balancing fruit and earth. Its complex flavors are framed by fine-grained tannins and an underlying minerality, leading to a graceful and memorable finish.