

### *ZD Wines Pinot Noir, Carneros*

Pinot Noir is the grandfather of ZD Wines. It was one of the first wines ZD produced and has been produced every year since the 1969 vintage — the year ZD was bonded.

The Carneros region is the home of the grapes used in producing ZD Pinot Noir. ZD's first Pinot Noir was proudly labeled: "Produced in Sonoma County From Grapes Grown in the Carneros Region of Napa" — making it the first wine to recognize the Carneros region on its label. It was 1981 before Carneros was registered as a recognized grape-growing appellation.

Part of ZD's original plan was to produce world-class Burgundian-style varietals, but over the years, a style was developed that is distinctly Carneros. Consistent quality has earned the Carneros region a reputation as one of the premier wine-growing regions of California.

A noble wine grape, Pinot Noir tends to produce wines of delicacy rather than power. ZD Pinot Noirs are crafted to reflect richness and intense varietal character in a style that uses the California sunshine in a cool growing region to fully mature the grapes for intensity and flavor.

### *The Production of ZD Pinot Noir*

Generally, Pinot Noir is the first varietal harvested by ZD. Picking starts near the beginning of September. The grapes are harvested by hand as they reach full maturity on the vines. Once the grapes are harvested, they are transported to the winery, where they are de-stemmed and crushed. The resulting must (juice, skins and seeds) is then allowed to ferment warm in open-top stainless steel tanks. The skins and seeds form a cap on top of the juice, which is punched down into the fermenting juice every six hours by hand, using an air cylinder device designed and built by Wine Master Robert de Leuze. Although hand punching is a very laborious job that must take place around the clock, it gently extracts more color and character from the skins than the primary alternative, which is drawing juice from the bottom of the tank and pumping it over the cap.

Pinot Noir is a very delicate grape that requires great attention, but the reward of this care is a very elegant wine with subtle aromas of violets and cinnamon. The wines are aged in 50 to 60 gallon French oak barrels for a total of 17 months in our cool cellars before being bottled.

ZD has crushed Pinot Noir from six different vineyards in the Carneros, each with different owners and viticultural practices. In 1996, ZD purchased a thirty-three acre Chardonnay vineyard in Carneros and renamed the property, The de Leuze Family Vineyard. Seven acres were replanted to Pinot Noir clones Swan and Hanzell. This vineyard is farmed and certified organic. The 1999 ZD Pinot Noir is the first bottling to contain a blend of Estate Pinot Noir.