

# What factors contribute to quality in Pinot noir?

Reflections on 28 years of wine  
making at Moorooduc Estate.

Josh Jensen (Calera) called Pinot noir the “especially grape” – when referring to growing grapes and making wine one can often add: “especially with Pinot noir”.

# “Great wine is made in the vineyard” (especially with Pinot noir?)

- The site and how it is managed
- The plant material e.g. clones
- Spacing, orientation etc.
- Vine age
- When and how the grapes are picked

What about the “wine making”?

# Winemaking can be thought of as having three somewhat separate aspects

- Not stuffing it up in big ways
- Not stuffing it up in small ways, and
- Influencing the 'style' of the wine (which involves myriad decisions)

# At Moorooduc Estate the winemaking aims are twofold

- to make the best wine we can, and
- to 'allow' the wines to express where the grapes come from – dare I say the 'terroir' of the vineyard where the grapes were grown

# Key changes in the evolution of red winemaking at Moorooduc Estate

- Increased maceration time (1990)
- Allowing natural MLF (1991)
- Wild yeast fermentation (1996)
- Adoption of screwcap closures (2004)
- Cooling fruit to ensure pre-fermentation maceration (2006)
- Exploring whole bunch fermentation methods
- Involvement in trials (VPNW)

# How we do it

## A - In the vineyard

- Early shoot thinning
- Accurate crop estimation
- Exposure to sunlight on the east
- Shading on the west
- Green harvest before veraison
- Hand harvest when flavours and phenolics are ripe (usually when sugars are in the 23-24° Brix range)



# How we do it

## B – in the winery

- Weigh and sulphur fruit (80ppm)
- Cool fruit overnight
- Destem into 1 or 2 tonne open SS fermenters
- Clean inside of fermenters above the must
- Sample after 24hrs maceration – sugar, pH and TA
- Adjust pH if necessary aiming for 3.45 or less
- Pump over with aeration at the start of fermentation, adding enzyme to aid later clarification

- Twice daily hand plunging during cap formation
- Add DAP only if ferment becomes smelly ( $H_2S$ )
- Aim for peak temperature in mid – 30's
- Gas and seal when  $CO_2$  evolution ceases
- Press to tank at 19 – 21 days total maceration
- Rack off sludgy lees to barrel after 1 – 2 days

- Allow spontaneous MLF in barrel
- Sulphur (100ppm) in barrel when MLF complete
- 15 – 17 months in barrel without racking
- Assemble in tank one month before bottling
- Fining (egg white) trials – wine usually not fined
- Bottled without filtration if NTU satisfactory (<25) with small  $\text{Cu}^{++}$  addition
- Scewcap closure