



CLOS DE LA TECH

SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS

2018 Domaine Lois Louise Côté Sud

OVERVIEW

With caves tunneling deep into a vine-covered ridge in the Santa Cruz Mountains and vineyards so steep they have to be farmed with a unique, specially-designed tractor moved by cables, Clos de la Tech is one of the most ambitious and innovative Pinot Noir producers in California. The winery was established in 1994 and continues to be operated by TJ Rodgers, founder and retired CEO of Cypress Semiconductor, and his wife, Valeta. Some of the highlights at Clos de la Tech include extreme growing conditions, high-altitude terrain, vine-by-vine farming, high-density planting (4,150 vines per acre), low yields, innovative equipment, gravity-flow winery, whole cluster fermentations with native yeast, and no filtration.

VINEYARD

Clos de la Tech's five Pinot Noirs come from three estate vineyards: Domaine du Docteur Rodgers, Domaine Valeta, and Domaine Lois Louise. Domaine Lois Louise is an extraordinarily steep 240-acre property (40 acres currently planted) high atop the Santa Cruz Mountains AVA. The "Côté Sud" block clings to the treacherous south-facing slope on the estate. Fully exposed and buffeted by strong maritime winds, it features a thin layer of topsoil over fractured rock and is planted to Dijon clones.

WINE MAKING

The fruit was hand harvested between September 8th and September 27th, 2018. After a 5-day cold soak, the grapes underwent traditional vinification methods including foot crushing, whole cluster fermentation with native yeast, malolactic fermentation on lees and gravity transfer (no pumping). The wine was aged in François Frères barrels (Bertrange Forest) for 18 months and bottled unfiltered.

TASTING NOTES

We call Côté Sud our "Pinot Noir with a 'blow away' bouquet." Ronn Wiegand: (*****) "Nose: Intense and complex: i.e., vigorous (cherry, vanilla, toast, cedar, raspberry, tobacco), and attractive. Palate: Fleshy in texture, quite rich in flavor (Vanilla, tobacco, spicy oak, cassis, cherry jam), with great balance, excellent oak integration, and a powerful, long finish. Summary: Outstanding; can be enjoyed now, but also will develop through at least 2033. Again: one of the best-ever versions of this wine."

STATISTICS

Composition: 100% Pinot Noir

Vineyard: Domaine Lois Louise Côté Sud block

Barrel Aging: 18 months in François Frères French oak barrels (80% new)

pH: 3.62

TA: 0.59g

Alcohol: 14.2

Production: 516 cases