

DUTTON *Goldfield*

2015

AZAYA RANCH VINEYARD

PINOT NOIR

MARIN COUNTY

APPELLATION

Marin County

VINEYARD

Azaya Ranch Vineyard
Harvested 9/28/15

ALCOHOL

13.7%

TITRATABLE ACIDITY

6.5 gm/Lit.

pH

3.59

WINEMAKING

Open top fermentation,
cold soak, punch down

BARREL AGING

Aged 15 months in
French oak
(50% new barrels)

WINEMAKERS

Dan Goldfield
Jeff Restel

CASES PRODUCED

184

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE

\$62

THE VINEYARD

We at Dutton-Goldfield have a special affinity for exotic sites in sparsely planted Marin County, and Azaya Ranch perfectly fits the bill. Mark Pasternak planted Azaya Ranch for the McEvoy family on an ideal south and west facing hill in Hicks Valley. This could be the sweet spot of Marin Viticulture: in the cold heart, but on a protected, well-drained slope. Mark and Dan chose 5 clones for this 18-acre ranch: 667, 828, 115, 777 and a touch of 2A. The fruit ripens very slowly, but the tiny berries stay plump and develop thick, chewy skins. For the Dutton-Goldfield offering, we harvest the 667 for its focused dark fruit character and structure, the 828 for its lively high tones, and a touch of 115 for its aromatic beauty. With its great natural acidity, the hallmark of this neighborhood is precise and nuanced berry fruit, lively intensity, and a refreshing lingering finish.

WINEMAKING

After hand sorting and destemming into a small open top fermenter, the must is cold-soaked for 7 days in order to gently extract color, spice and fruit characters, while mitigating harsher tannins. To further this aim, no SO₂ was used at the crusher. Gentle treatment helps bring the innate floral and berry notes of this wine to the forefront and preserve its intricate complexity. We punch down 1 to 3 times daily, according to the stage of the fermentation; less often and shorter at later stages to avoid bitter tannin pickup. After initial aging in 45% new wood, we blended in the early spring to homogenize the wine and hone our barrel choices. The bright and juicy nature of the 2015 Azaya just loved to soak up the earthy spice of Seguin Moreau Icone barrels, and absorb the sweet toffee of Taransaud barrels. We bottled the wine in February 2017.

THE WINE

The cold spring weather hit our Azaya Ranch vineyard particularly hard, with an unexpected frost taking out much of the potential crop. Luckily, warmer weather followed, allowing the vines to push out and flower again, giving us at least a miniscule amount of grapes to make into wine. The result of that is an especially intense and bright wine this vintage, with an amazing combination of fineness and depth. The aromas lead with tart cherry and cranberry, sweetened with a Chambord-like backdrop. Candied raspberry flavors fill the mouth, with cinnamon and nutmeg lending baking spice touches. A trace of underbrush provides another layer of complexity, before the pop of cranberry chimes in at the finish, leaving you refreshed for the next sip. This is a mouthful of wine that's wonderful on its own in good company, and even better with a goat cheese pizza to counterpoint the sweet nature of the wine.

Dutton-Goldfield Winery began in a vineyard in 1998, when longtime colleagues and friends Steve Dutton and Dan Goldfield recognized a shared vision between them — to craft wines that express the personalities of their vineyards, and which they'd enjoy drinking at their own dinner tables. Our mission is to produce world-class wines that display the brightness of fruit, complexity, structure and balance that are reflective of our cool coastal home.