

DUTTON Goldfield

2016

AZAYA RANCH VINEYARD

PINOT NOIR

MARIN COUNTY

APPELLATION

Marin County

VINEYARD

Azaya Ranch Vineyard

HARVEST DATE

September 26, 2016

ALCOHOL

13.7%

TITRATABLE ACIDITY

5.8 gm/Lit.

pH

3.65

WINEMAKING

Open top fermentation,
cold soak, punch down

BARREL AGING

Aged 16 months in
French oak
(50% new barrels)

WINEMAKER

Dan Goldfield

CASES PRODUCED

246

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 2016 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 2018.

THE WINE

The harvest in 2016 started early, which made this pick on September 26 one of our last (only our other Marin Pinot, Devil's Gulch, and our Syrah came in after, one day later). The long hang time ripened our Azaya Ranch Vineyard Pinot Noir beautifully, giving the wine a particularly candied quality this vintage. The nose offers up a dizzying array of spicy blackberry, raspberry, violets and rosehips. After a bit of time in the glass, notes of rhubarb pie join the mix, adding a bit of a savory element. The first sip brings lively toffee covered raspberry, along with cassis, dried cranberries and sandalwood, a perfect mix of fruit and spice, all carried on fine-grained tannins. The essential core of sweet fruit makes this a great match for a smoky glazed ham, mushroom risotto, an earthy roasted beet salad, or a mild feta cheese.

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.