Lilo Pinot Noir, Birichino

California, United states



Product code	AB10ZZRC
Grapes	Pinot Noir
Country	UNITED STATES
ABV%	13.5
Case Size	12
Closure Style	Cork
Producer	Arpent Birichino
Vintage	2022

Vegan Vegetarian

BIRICHINO

Producer

Alex Krause and John Locke founded Birichino in Santa Cruz in 2008. Drawing on a combined four decades making wine in California, France, Italy, and beyond, they are focused on attaining the perfect balance of perfume, poise, and puckishness. Sourcing from a number of carefully farmed, family-owned, own-rooted 19th and early 20th century vineyards (and a few from the late disco era) planted by and large in more moderate, marine-influenced climates, their preoccupation is to safeguard the quality and vibrance of their raw materials. Their preference is for minimal intervention, most often favouring native fermentations, employing stainless or neutral barrels, minimal racking and fining, and avoiding filtration altogether when possible. But most critically, their aim is to make delicious wines that give pleasure, revitalize, and revive.

Tasting Notes

Our two-word signifier for Lilo when describing it is "Pretty & Perfumed". One should not infer from "Pretty & Perfumed" however that Lilo is ever overtly fruity. It is not. Rather, the perfume recalls woodsy incense (even in the absence of new barrels as is the case here) and mountain herbs. When Alex poured it for Stephen Spurrier (of The Judgement of Paris fame) he volunteered that it reminded him of Mercurey in a riper vintage. Yes, the wine is made from grapes (a fruit) and more than enough fruitfulness is on display (red raspberries?), however the fruitfulness functions as an accent to the less obvious yet kaledioscopic range of flavors, the myriad threads of which are not so easy to grasp and tug. But tug you should.

Viticulture

This historic 100 hectare property lies 3.5 kilometres north of Calistoga, at the base of Mount St. Helena. The region lies on a complex terroir with a mixture of alluvial and volcanic soils, some on the flat, some on steeply sided hillsides. Extending

out from the Napa River is the alluvial soil, the most prevalent type on the property. In the back and outside areas of the vineyard are volcanic soils, formed by ancient lava flows caused by tectonic uplifting. Sustainable farming is practised avoiding the use of any chemical fertilisers. Instead organic chicken manure and compost made with the previous season's pomace - seeds, stems and grape skins left after crushing is used. Ladybirds are used to combat unwanted pests, and light ploughing is done to keep the vineyard clean and free from weeds. Harvesting is carried out at night to preserve the fruit.

Winemaking

Lilo occupies a steep and meteorologically precarious, south-facing slope above the town of Aptos, roughly three miles from the Pacific. On a clear midday, the view out to Monterey Bay and Pacific Grove is spectacular. South-facing vineyards are usually so situated as to act as a heat trap, maximizing midday and afternoon sunlight to aid in ripening such as one sees on the great vineyards of Germany's Mosel. At Lilo, this exposition opens the site to the strong marine influence, and in the Spring, frequent cold weather and rain that interefere with fruit set and revive the spectre of mildew pressure, here addressed with well-timed applications of organic methods of control. Yields accordingly are low in a good year, and disastrous in the most challenging vintages. We made none at all in 2017 or 2020, and only a single barrel in 2021. However the soils are interesting, vigor low, and airflow through the canopy of well-set crop excellent. If weather cooperates in the Spring, this can be one of the best two or three sites in all of BirichinoLand.