

the hilt

The Hilt champions pinot noir and chardonnay from the climate margins of California's coastal winegrowing regions—Santa Barbara County's Sta. Rita Hills and Santa Maria Valley AVA's prominent among them. Two schools of winemaking form The Hilt's view of chardonnay and pinot noir:

THE OLD GUARD

The Old Guard wines encompass a restrained elegance and balance. Flavor and textural elements take on a new complexity-and minerality is often more notable. The aromas and flavors of The Old Guard tend to be more savory, and quietly forceful. A rooted sensibility overtakes brash exuberance.

THE VANGUARD

The Vanguard focuses on what is new in the world, if you will, which is often anchored by wines that are produced with lusher, fleshy, fruit-driven qualities—often referred to as baby fat—a style that owns a distinct place in the chardonnay and pinot noir field. The aromas and flavors in The Vanguard are more round and more forward—bristling with enthusiasm and elegance.

2011

THE VANGUARD
PINOT NOIR
STA. RITA HILLS

CASES: 980
ALC: 14.1%
BARRELS: 45% new French oak,
55% neutral French oak

Showcases the beguiling contrast between dark brooding fruit and vinous, herbal notes that defines the 2011 pinot noirs.

The ever changing nose offers hints of black plum, fresh cracked pepper, black tea, kalamata olive, smoked meat, black cherry and clove. The most complex nose I have yet seen in a Hilt blend.

Towering aromatics. On the palate it is mineral laden and tightly wound. The intense black fruit starts to shine through, mingling with vinous notes of crunchy stems and incense-like spices. Absolutely represents the dark side of pinot noir.

Earthy, cedary and dusty, but also endowed with serious black fruit. A wall of fine and soft tannin that caresses the palate on the finish. A wine of undeniable power and depth, but as the 2011 acidity starts to shine on the finish it is ultimately defined by its elegance and finesse.

— *Matt Dees, Winemaker*

93 Points

The Wine Advocate August 2013

95 Points

Vinous Antonio Galloni July 2013

