

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.

2009

THE VANGUARD
PINOT NOIR
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

CASES: 762
ALC: 14.5%
CLONES: 667, 777
BARRELS: 35% new French oak,
medium toast

To the eye a formidable dark shade of purple. Then on the nose: burly, brooding and slow to show its cards. Hints at a long life ahead. Bold black fruit begins to show with time, followed by wild bramble notes and a savory, complex mix of smoke, dried leaves and black licorice. An absolutely massive wine on the attack and mid palate flooded with layers of black fruit—a nod to the extreme density and focus of the 2009 vintage. Balanced by a backbone of gentle acidity that tames the dense and coiled black fruit. Gentle but persistent tannins give a dusty nuance to the black-berry and anise driven finish.

