



RIVERBENCH



2016 PINOT MEUNIER

Estate Grown & Bottled – Santa Maria Valley

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| COMPOSITION | 100% Pinot Meunier, Méthode Champenoise |
| HARVEST | August 9, 2016 |
| TIRAGE | March 19, 2018 |
| DOSAGE | None |
| DISGORGEMENT | December, 2018 |
| ACIDITY | 0.84 g/100ml |
| PH | 3.28 |
| ALCOHOL | 12.75% |
| PRODUCTION | 50 cases |
| PRICE | \$68 |

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Editor's Choice

Wine Enthusiast
April 2019

WINEMAKERS NOTES

Every once in a while, something comes along that disrupts the routine and brings a feeling of unexpected bliss. A stranger in line at the market tells you a funny joke. A barista passes you your coffee, free of charge. A friend unexpectedly shares her bounty of organic lemons.

In 2014, we at Riverbench decided to fully invest in developing our grower sparkling wine program by grafting Pinot Meunier. This rare grape is famous in Champagne, France, but has yet to make itself known in California; we are, in fact, the first to grow it for sparkling wine here in Santa Barbara County. We jumped in with both feet and took a chance, and this first Pinot Meunier sparkling wine is lighting up our world. The grape itself provides quite a backbone, forming a sparkling wine with structure and complexity. Bright citrus and ripe blackberry plays softly in the background behind a pretty puff of pillowy yeastiness and a touch of cream. Some might get an exciting and unique note of rye on the finish. Either way, this bottling stands for something that puts a smile on your face. It's blissful.

2016 HARVEST

The 2016 vintage was a return to our historical cool spring and moderate summer temperatures. The grapes for sparkling wine came in starting August 9th. Pinot Noir began trickling in mid-August. The majority of the ranch ripened in mid-September and the Chardonnay came in the first two weeks of October, finishing October 14th. Balanced flavors and physiological ripeness occurred at higher Brix than we have had for the last several vintages. The cooler temperatures allowed for longer hang time. Quality and character for Vintage 2016 is beautiful. Malolactic fermentations occurred simultaneously with primary fermentations. The very cold winter has delayed the completion of both primary and secondary fermentations. Our winter bottling was delayed to allow the wines to complete fermentations. Following harvest we welcomed an abundance of much needed rain which should be favorable to the coming 2017 harvest.

