

# MERLOT

## PINNACLE SERIES

### The Vintage

The 2023 growing season along California's Central Coast unfolded at a measured pace, marked by a cool spring and moderate summer that stretched the ripening window. In Santa Ynez Valley, steady coastal breezes and mild daytime highs preserved vibrant acidity, while extended hang time encouraged flavor development without excess sugar. A late September harvest delivered fruit with striking balance, lively aromatics, fine tannins, and a core of freshness that speaks to the elegance of the vintage and personality of the varietal.

### The Production

Harvested in mid-October at 25.4° Brix from the esteemed Santa Ynez Valley, this Merlot was crafted in a classic, time-honored style. The fruit was optically sorted to a meticulous standard, selecting only the most pristine berries for fermentation. It then rested for 24 months in 100% new Sylvain Collection French oak barrels, gaining depth, structure, and refined texture. Bottled unfined and unfiltered to preserve its natural purity, the wine embodies precision and power.

### The Palate

Aromatically, the wine layers black plum, cassis, and ripe cherry with dried sage, graphite, and cocoa nib. With air this evolves into subtler tones of cedar and violet. The palate is generous yet precise. Dark fruit framed by polished but firm tannins, support a vibrant line of natural acidity that carries length and a balanced finish.

### The Series

The Pinnacle Series honors California's most extraordinary vineyards, sites that stand apart for their history, singular terroir, and ability to produce wines of profound character. Personally selected by winemaker Anthony Versochi, each bottling reflects a unique corner of the state and a shared ethos of excellence. These are exceptionally limited-production, vineyard-driven wines, crafted to showcase the diversity and highest potential of California's landscape while embodying the precision and craftsmanship that define Pius Estates.

Appellation:

Happy Canyon of Santa Barbara

Vintage: 2023

Varietal: 100% Merlot

Production: 250 cases

Alcohol: 14.7%

TA: 6.0 g/L

pH: 3.6

