



# 2014 POLUPOUS ANTLE VINEYARD

This is a strange and remarkable wine made from 100% Pinot Noir from the 45 year-old vines planted in a high-mountain desert hillside in the Chalone appellation. It is the greatest demonstration of the primacy of the growing conditions of all the wines that we have made.

The vineyard source is Antle, an extremely interesting property in the Chalone appellation in the Gavilan mountains, very high up-- a kind of rolling desert a few thousand feet above the valley floor, and directly facing the Pacific. The soils are marine in origin and really well-drained; all of the vineyards slope steeply, the vines are old and embedded in struggle. We could not resist trying to work with fruit when we first visited the vineyard.

This wine is our second effort, and it is very good. It is masculine, with deep earthiness and a nearly rough muscularity. There is no fruitiness or any form of sweetness-- this was not our aim. The wine is subtle for all of its strength, and complex, yet it is neither as delicate as we would have liked, nor as simply expressive. It is somewhat brooding. The tannins are powerful and complex— much more tannic than any Pinot I have ever had. This more than anything reflects the vineyard. The wine is like a Priorat, and nothing like a Burgundy— because its source is much more like the schist hillsides of Catalunya than the soft, rolling hills of Burgundy.

I revise this in 2018, just having opened a few bottles: the wine is so good— and still so young. It is just becoming approachable.

We made the wine following the Courier protocol: upon receiving the fruit (after an all night adventure trucking it back from the Gavilans), we treading it lightly, releasing the juice from about a third of the berries, and destemmed not at all. The fermentations macerated for about a month and were punched down hardly at all during this time— all of the extraction came from a floating cap. After draining and pressing, we matured the wine for about a year in 220 liter neutral oak barrels, without racking, topping, or the addition of SO<sub>2</sub>. The wine was bottled with 0 free and about 40 mg/L total.

A note on the name: The first time that I saw the vineyard, I was amazed at the sea shells and marine fossils evident right on the soil surface, at a few thousand feet above the present sea. Near the crest of one block, a fossilized tiny octopus— “polupous” in ancient Greek.

TOTAL PRODUCTION:

113 cases