



EMERITUS

RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY

In 1999 Emeritus was born when Brice Cutrer Jones closed on the purchase of Don and Marcia Hallberg's prime apple orchard in the heart of the Russian River Valley. The 115-acre parcel, the Hallberg Ranch, is located two miles north of Sebastopol, on both sides of the Gravenstein Highway and directly on the Gold Ridge – the ten-mile long ridge that bears the name of the predominate soils of the area. Prior to that purchase Brice had purchased a plot of land on the far reaches of the Sonoma Coast with marine influence and Goldridge sandy loam soil. This plot in the remote town of Annapolis was on a small outcropping of Goldridge soil is home to the William Wesley vineyard.

After acquiring the Hallberg property in 1999, Emeritus began to plant vineyards at both Hallberg Ranch and William Wesley. Emeritus also began to outfit the Hallberg barn with fermentation vats, barrels, environmental controls and began to experiment with making Pinot Noir. Then, in 2004, Brice finally convinced longtime Pinotophile, Burgundy-trained winemaker Don Blackburn to join the team. Don came aboard the day before the first harvest of the William Wesley Vineyard and established the hallmark style of Emeritus – that of elegance and charm. We lost Don to a brief but serious illness after the '08 harvest, but his protégé, Nicolas Cantacuzene, stepped into his shoes and continues his quest: to produce an authentic wine of great distinction, one that represents its vineyard heritage, a wine of great balance, elegance and charm.

The utmost care is taken to preserve the purity of the grapes from the moment they enter the winery. Hand-sorting at the winery selects only the best grapes, removing any unevenly ripened or damaged clusters. The grapes are then transferred into small French Oak or stainless steel fermentation vats for cold soaking. During the 3-5 day soak the grapes are kept at a cool temperature to prevent fermentation from beginning, this is when the grapes macerate and the juice begins to take on the color from the skins. Once the juice is ready, the team allows the temperature to gently rise and the natural yeast on the grape skins start to ferment the juice into wine. Once fermentation is complete the wine is aged in barrels.



"The more you know about wine, the more you'll want to know about us."
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