

COCO TOARU series 2017 Pinot Noir



The production of high quality Pinot noir is not an easy pursuit. The grape variety is difficult to grow on many levels. Firstly, more than other grapes it really does ‘choose’ the sites in which it will perform well. Chardonnay can make a passably good wine under any number of environmental conditions: different soils, different climates, etc. But Pinot noir only performs in a narrowly defined range of soils and weather patterns… grow the grape in conditions not exactly fit to the grape’s comfort zone and the result is at best a boring, weak red wine. Pinot noir is also a notoriously particular grape when it comes to yields: over-cropping Pinot noir by as little as an extra ton per hectare will rob the grapes (and the resulting wine) of depth and character. In the cellar, too, Pinot noir is a demanding partner. An extremely gentle hand is required, or the delicacy, silkiness and ethereal aromas that are unique to the grape will be destroyed, leaving a clunky, inelegant wine.

These many difficulties, though, hardly keep people from trying. In fact, given the frustrations and failures that accompany attempts to make great Pinot noir, it is surprising that so many try. But one experience with a great bottle of Pinot noir—the dancingly light, yet complex aromas, the silky palate feel and the gentle, earthy finish as soft as a lover’s kiss—will convince anyone of the heights that the grape can achieve. And we foolish winemakers fall under the spell of this most fickle partner.

The COCO TOARU PINOT NOIR was started from a new vineyard planted in Yoichi. The growers responsible are the KIMURAS, a family operation that grows more Pinot Noir (and has done so longer) than just about anyone else in Japan. We have known the family for a long time, and have admired greatly their dedication to quality Pinot noir growing.

This new vineyard is planted on a steep west-facing slope of red clay-loam soils. The vines are lovingly attended, and produced only moderate amounts of very ripe Pinot noir. In the cellar, in keeping with the Coco Toaru philosophy, the grapes are lightly crushed, fermented with wild yeasts at moderate temperatures, pressed gently, and then aged in a mix of wooden barrels and small-volume stainless steel tanks. Nothing is added to the wine except a modicum of sulphur dioxide at bottling, and nothing is removed as we avoid the use of damaging filtration equipment.

2017 vintage continues a run of difficult years, with autumn being wet and cloudy; and plagued by an early frost that slowed ripeness way down and made for strong acid in the wines. The 2017, while similar to the 2016, has very strong, fruity/floral aromatics and a solid acid spine guaranteeing a long life. We hope you enjoy our first attempt at a Coco Toaru Pinot noir. We had great fun making the wine, and are encouraged by the results. A Votre santé !

VARIETY	Pinot Noir 100 %		
VINEYARD	Nobori district, Yoichi, Hokkaido		
HARVEST DATE	23rd to 30th October 2017		
BOTTLING	Bottled on: 21st April 2019 The number of bottles: 2,757 (750ml)		
ANALYSIS DATA	Alcohol: 11.0 %	Total acidity: 0.76 g/ 100 ml.	Residual Sugar: 0.19 %

COCO TOARU series is our joint venture with 10R Winery (Iwamizawa, Hokkaido) to produce individualistic wines of quality from Hokkaido-grown grapes using traditional, non-manipulative winegrowing techniques.

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