



# SIERRA MADRE *Vineyard*

## ● ● ● TERRIOR

The Santa Maria Valley is an exceptionally cool growing region, due to it's rare east-west valley geography, which provides a direct influence from the Pacific Ocean.

Sierra Madre Vineyard is the most northern and one of the westernmost vineyards in the Santa Maria Valley, only 15 miles from the coast, and benefits greatly from its unique marine influence.

As its proximity to the ocean dictates, the soils of Sierra Madre Vineyard are marine by nature, and made up of sandy to sandy-loam textures. Soil vigor is low, which contributes to extensive root development, lower yields and concentrated fruit. Two types of sandy loam soil series exist here; Garey Sandy Loam and Pleasanton Sandy Loam. Both are well-drained and low in organic material.

## ● ● ● KEY FACTS

<b>Owners</b>	Doug and Jan Circle
<b>Previous Owners</b>	Robert Mondavi, Dale Hampton Group
<b>First Planting</b>	1971
<b>First Vintage</b>	2006
<b>Appellation</b>	Santa Maria Valley
<b>Planted Acreage</b>	173.29 Total 91.4 Chardonnay 64.22 Pinot Noir 11.97 Pinot Gris 5.8 Pinot Blanc
<b>Rootstocks</b>	Chardonnay: 5C, S04, 101-14, Free Pinot Noir: 5C, 5BB, S04, RG, 110 R, 1103P, 459, 101-14
<b>Clones</b>	Chardonnay: 4,6,15,17,76,95,RY, Wente Pinot Noir: 5, 2A, 115, 667, 777, 828
<b>Current &amp; past winegrape customers</b>	Au Bon Climat, David Bruce, Byron, Edna Valley Vineyard, Fiddlehead Cellars, Gainey Vineyard, Hahn Estates, Hitching Post, Ken Brown, Lane Tanner, LaZarre Wines, Paul Lato, Qupe, Row 11, Rusack, Sanford Winery, Scott Cellars, Wild Horse
<b>Winemakers</b>	Ken Volk, 2006 Steve Rasmussen, 2007-Present

## ● ● ● HISTORY

The Sierra Madre property, one of the oldest in the Santa Maria Valley, was first planted in 1971. In 1975, Dale Hampton took over management and eventually purchased the property with partners. With considerable demand for Santa Maria fruit coming from the larger growing regions, Hampton wanted to ensure that San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara County vintners would be assured of this fine local resource for their wines.

In the early '80s, wine critics began to take notice. Noted wine writer Mike Stepanovich called Sierra Madre Vineyard "one of the state's – make that the nation's – best Pinot Noir vineyards," citing consecutive awards for Sanford Winery, Byron Vineyard & Winery, and Wild Horse Winery for "Best American Pinot Noir," all from Sierra Madre fruit.

In 1996, Mondavi purchased the property and replanted the vineyard under Byron winemaker Ken Brown's auspices. Brown planted using a multitude of rootstock and clone combinations, so as to offer Byron a variety of choices, as well as the opportunity for great complexity of blends. This planting experiment is an important milestone in Sierra Madre's history, as the outcome is a rich component in Sierra Madre's terroir.

In early 2003, strawberry grower Doug Circle purchased 500 acres of Sierra Madre Vineyard from Mondavi, with a plan to reintroduce the site to a multitude of great winemakers. Since then, winery clients have included a veritable "who's who" of Central Coast wineries, many of whom have or will be producing Sierra Madre vineyard designated wines.

This precious parcel is in good hands with Circle. His more than 30 years in agriculture, in both farming and business, uniquely qualifies him to be the next shepherd for Sierra Madre Vineyard. In partnership with the highly respected Mesa Vineyard Management Company, he is constantly researching, learning, and implementing new farming techniques to guide this very special vineyard to new heights.

In 2006, Doug Circle convinced celebrated winemaker, Ken Volk, a longtime fan of the vineyard, to craft 10 tons of Pinot and 3 tons of Chardonnay for a Sierra Madre Vineyard branded wine, the first in the vineyard's long and distinguished history. In 2007, the winemaking reins were handed over to another Central Coast legend, Steve Rasmussen.



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