



## 2008 Russian Cuvée

**Russian Cuvée** commemorates the style of sparklings we made for the historic Reagan - Gorbachev summit meetings, which ended the Cold War. While more opulent than the Classic Vintage Brut, the higher dosage doesn't come across as sweet, but more floral and makes the wine richer and fuller. Although 2008 will be remembered for its erratic weather, the upside of the low crop allowed us to micromanage the harvest in each block resulting in a particularly expressive and elegant sparkling wine.

### Technical Data

**Appellation:** Green Valley of Russian River Valley

**Blend:** 72% Pinot Noir 28% Chardonnay

**Alcohol:** 13.5% v/v

**Acidity:** .80 g/100ml

**Residual Sugar:** 1.1 g/100ml

**pH:** 3.06

**Malolactic Fermentation:** None

**Barrels:** 29% Barrel Fermented

**Harvest Dates:** August 30 - September 9, 2008

**Date Bottled:** July 2009

**Release Date:** Current disgorging, March 2013

**Total Production:** 800 Cases

**Suggested Retail Price:** \$40.00

**Artisanal Winemaking:** Hand harvested in the chilly fog of early morning, our Pinot Noir and Chardonnay grapes are gently pressed as whole clusters yielding base wines of great delicacy. The juice ferments slowly at 62° to 65° f retaining vibrant fruit esters. In blending this wine we chose Pinot Noir and Chardonnay lots that were a bit shy by nose but still showing an appropriate hint of varietal character. What was once shy now exhibits wonderful complexity and creaminess that comes from an average of four years of aging on the yeast. The dosage for this wine is 7 mls of special LEX (50% Pinot Noir, 50% chardonnay), 7mls of Brut LEX (75% Pinot Noir, 25% Chardonnay) and 6 mls 2007 Corral Chardonnay

**Precision Winegrowing:** At Iron Horse "Estate Bottled" means that the winemaking begins in the vineyard. Our location in Green Valley represents the very best soil, climate and aspects for Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Our goal is to grow the best winegrapes we should be growing through what we call "precision winegrowing." All pruning, canopy management, irrigation and cover crop decisions are determined on a block-by-block (and sometimes even vine-by-vine) basis, considering both the vintage at hand and the long-term needs of the land.

**For Sparkling and Still Wine, Precision Harvesting is Key:** Our only rule is to make the best wines we can. We wait until harvest to decide sparkling or still, as the only difference is the brix level (or the amount of sugar in the grapes, less for sparklings, more for still). Then winemaker David Munksgard considers berry size (bigger is better for sparklings, smaller for still), the health of the canopy, clone selection, even small details such as the relative dampness of the cover crop can make a difference. If necessary, parts of the same block may be picked on different days.

**Tasting Notes & Food Pairings:** By nose: grapefruit, ripe red apple and Hazelnut. By mouth: mandarin orange, ripe red apple and Hazelnuts. The creamy texture of Russian Cuvée beautifully balances the briny quality of shellfish like oysters on the half shell with mignonette or Dungeness crab with drawn butter. Also delicious with appetizers - butter-nut squash soup with toasted hazelnuts or frisée salad with lardons of bacon, crumbled goat cheese and a soft poached egg.



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