

# Pinot Noir Press



## Kessler-Haak Vineyard & Winery

Nestled in the Northwest corner of the Sta. Rita Hills, Kessler-Haak is crafting terroir-expressive wines that capture the uniqueness and beauty of their organically farmed 30-acre vineyard.



As the Sta. Rita Hills continues to rise in stature and prominence among great Pinot Noir growing areas in California, a number of small wineries have taken great advantage of the area's relatively sudden rise in popularity. Kessler-Haak Vineyard & Winery is a relatively small producer that owns a 30-acre vineyard in the AVA almost midway between Buellton and Lompoc on California's Central Coast.

Dan and Ellen (Haak) Kessler own and operate Kessler-Haak Vineyard & Winery, which began operations in 2005. Both were members of the high-tech semi-conductor industry before falling to the adamant stimuli of the amiable wine bug.

Their story is a familiar one in the wine industry: Dan Kessler started drinking wine, then learned about wine, became a home winemaker, and eventually planted 200 vines in his backyard. Ellen was a native Oregonian who shared his interest in wine. The couple fell in love with the Sta. Rita Hills AVA and decided to purchase a 40-acre parcel. In 2005, they planted Pinot Noir (7 different clones) and Chardonnay (3 clones) in the cool climate region and began life as vineyard owners.

*Why the interest in Pinot Noir?*

"We specialize in Pinot Noir and Chardonnay due to the location of our vineyard," informed Dan Kessler. "We chose our location because it was

situated in the coolest microclimate in the coolest portion of the Sta. Rita Hills AVA. What I love about our AVA is its unique climate and small size. Mountains along the west coast of California face north-south and block ocean influence. Our AVA is the only spot along the west coast of North and South America (I think) where the mountains face east-west (as a result of a piece of the continent breaking away and spinning 90 degrees as it drifted). This east-west orientation allows marine influence and makes our AVA region 10 to 20 degrees cooler than nearby regions, while allowing us a long growing season that results in wines with fresh berry character and great acidity."

The vineyard is maintained with strict organic farming practices while striving to find the natural harmony and coexistence between the vines, plants, and animals. As a result, the vineyard consistently produces world-class, distinctive Pinot Noirs.

"Life is about the journey," Dan Kessler has stated. "For us, that journey involves wine and its incredible ability to capture the essence of its origin - the vineyard. We strive to express - through our fruit - the uniqueness and beauty of this place."

It is a pleasure to present this incredible wine to our members, from a top Pinot Noir producer. Please enjoy!





## DAN KESSLER, WINEMAKER

Dan Kessler was one of the first graduates of UC Davis' distance learning program that provided him a winemaker's certificate in 2006. He has also worked at nearby (Buellton) Lafond Winery with Bruce McGuire, where he was the assistant winemaker and further enhanced his experience and defined his palate.

Kessler's approach to winemaking is a minimalistic one, confidently relying on traditional methods and techniques to craft his

world-class wines. He also believes that winemaking begins in the vineyard and that he is a winegrower first and foremost, and a winemaker second. Coaxing the best fruit from each vine requires an integral involvement with the grape growing process; being there each day, touching the vines and soil, and being hands-on in all aspects of farming.

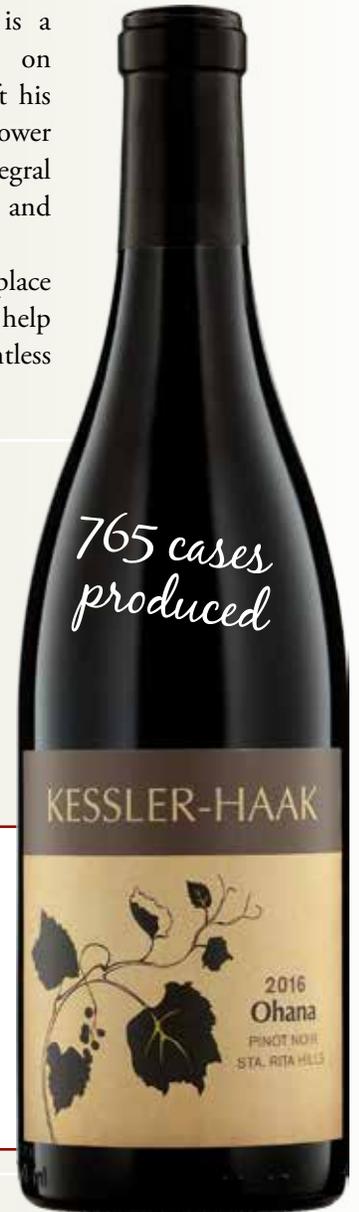
At Kessler-Haak, it is Dan Kessler's goal to craft premium food-friendly wines that speak of place and time. To best achieve this, he follows organic farming practices in the vineyard that also help develop a balance and harmony in each and every wine. Dan Kessler's efforts have resulted in countless award-winning wines since Kessler-Haak's inception.

## KESSLER-HAAK 2016 'OHANA' PINOT NOIR

Sta. Rita Hills, California

A signature Kessler-Haak wine, the 2016 'Ohana' Pinot Noir is a beautiful bottling from this celebrated vineyard. On the nose, tart cherry aromas blend with hints of blackberry and dried herbs, before leading into bright raspberry and earthy spice nuances. The mouth feel is lush, with mouth-watering brightness and flavors of tart cherry, violet and cassis that lead into a long finish. Aged 9 months in oak. 100% Pinot Noir. Enjoy!

**91 POINTS**  
– *Wine Enthusiast*



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