

Pinot Noir Press



SEAGRAPE WINE COMPANY

From the Seacoast to your table, Seagrape Wine Company offers terroir-driven Chardonnay and Pinot Noir from select vineyards in the Sta. Rita Hills of Santa Barbara County.



Many of us say we'd like to give up our regular job to follow a dream, but few of us ever act on it and make the leap into a dramatically different career. But, every once in a while, you meet someone who has done just that - like the owner and winemaker behind Seagrape Wine Company, Karen Steinwachs.

Before pursuing a job in the wine industry, Karen spent twenty years in the high tech world, most recently working in marketing at a high-tech startup. Her husband, Dave, was also in high-tech, managing a logistics company. Often, Karen and Dave would escape the world of PCs, CPUs and the LA traffic for trips to Santa Barbara wine country and tastings of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay on bucolic country roads. They were especially drawn to the most westerly part of the Santa Ynez Valley, a region that would soon be officially recognized as the Sta. Rita Hills.

Karen and Dave were also self-proclaimed 'island people,' with Dave originating from the British Isles and Karen having lived part of her nomadic life in St. Croix. Their vacations were often spent somewhere in the tropics on seaside beaches, another place they could escape from the everyday tech life of gazing at computer screens in high-rise towers.

In 2001, Karen wanted a break from the corporate world and on a whim, took a harvest intern job at Foley Estate Winery in Santa Barbara. It was a physical job, and she spent her days as a cellar rat - shovelling stems, cleaning out fermenters, and hefting barrels - but she loved it. It was just the beginning of a slippery slope into the winemaking business.

The cellar rat job turned into a full-time position; from there, Karen did a few vintages as assistant winemaker at Fiddlehead Cellars, and in 2007, she became the winemaker at Buttonwood Farm Winery (a position she still holds today). It wasn't long before her husband finally had enough of the freeway congestion in LA and transitioned his business to Lompoc, where he provided wineries with logistics, warehousing, website and e-commerce solutions. Now they were both away from the "Sig Alerts" and office cubicles and the future seemed especially bright.

In 2007, Karen and Dave made the first vintage for Seagrape Wine Company. They decided to focus on Chardonnay and Pinot Noir from the Sta. Rita Hills appellation, the region they had originally fallen in love with and the grapes that make the most stellar wines in this part of the country.

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The name of their winery is especially meaningful. The Seagrape tree (*Coccoloba uvifera*) is a gorgeous plant found near seaside beaches in the tropics, and is a visual reminder of Karen and Dave's winemaking roots, their love of the islands, and the persistent influence of the sea. Of course, wine is not made from the fruit of the Seagrape tree, but rather those wine grapes (*vitus vinifera*) that grow so exceptionally well in Santa Barbara County's ocean-influenced vineyards, particularly in the Sta. Rita Hills appellation.

Sadly, Dave died suddenly in 2014, leaving his earth far too soon at just 54 years of age. Seagrape Wine Company continues though, and today Karen crafts a limited line-up of delicious wines from their beloved Sta. Rita Hills. We

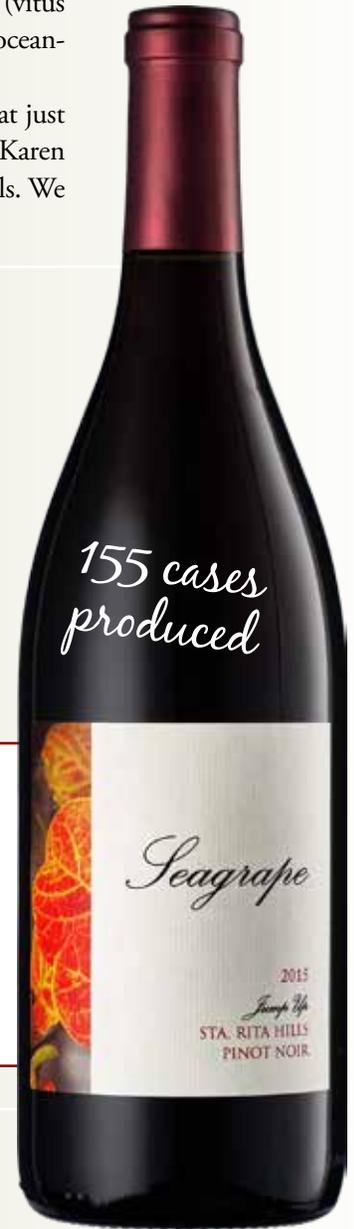
are happy to present Seagrape Wine Co. to our Pinot Noir Wine Club members. Cheers!

SEAGRAPE 2015 'JUMP UP' PINOT NOIR Sta. Rita Hills

According to the dictionary, a "Jump Up" is either a style of drum and bass music or an occasion of mass dancing and merrymaking. This Pinot Noir blend was named after the exuberant attitude of those spontaneous street parties in the Caribbean that Karen knows as 'Jump Ups.' Indeed, this 2015 Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir is a vibrant and joyous wine! Aromas of red currant and blueberry play with the flavors of spicy white pepper, cherry, and rocky minerality that is a hallmark of the appellation. The silky texture is interlaced with soft tea-like tannins in this beautifully balanced, pretty wine. Aged in oak. Enjoy now until 2023.

91 POINTS

– *Wine Enthusiast*
magazine



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