

Brewer - Clifton

About Us

Born of an obsession with Santa Barbara County terroir, we formed Brewer - Clifton in the early 1990's. We both had significant sales and production experience with a multitude of Santa Barbara County wineries, and always felt compelled to push the limits of the fruit from the area further than our previous employers had set forth to do. We set out to put the essence of the best vineyards in the area into a bottle.

Brewer - Clifton focus solely on site-expressive wines from the Sta. Rita Hills appellation using Chardonnay and Pinot Noir as voices of place. The area's long growing seasons and diversity of marine-based soils combine to produce dynamic and explosive wines with great purity and precision. Each vineyard site is nurtured identically, allowing the pedigree of place to play the most significant role in our portfolio of wines.

From our initial production of 1996, our pursuit has been to express the individual identity of particular sites within our appellation. While that approach remains a strong driving force behind our efforts, we elected to demonstrate a more complete voice of place beginning with the spectacular 2007 harvest. From this point forward, we expect to release a Sta. Rita Hills Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, capitalizing on the blending of our most heralded vineyard holdings. Just like a quartet

is incomparable to a solo, it is neither the goal nor the intent to compare our appellation wines with our vineyard-specific bottlings. The two should be interpreted as separate manifestations along a lateral plain where the difference of expression is a celebrated attribute.

In addition to our collective efforts, Steve Clifton also produces wine under his own label, called *Palmina*, which focuses exclusively on Italian varietals, and is the winemaker at *Tritono*, an Argentine producer of Malbec. Greg Brewer produces wine under the *diatom* label, as well as being the winemaker at *Melville*, a Santa Rita Hills winery dedicated to estate grown Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Syrah.

Brewer-Clifton wines are only available in small quantities. Total production averages between 7,000 and 8,000 cases annually.



Brewer – Clifton

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Our Philosophy

“It is our primary goal and priority to deliver the essence of that vineyard as clearly and honestly as possible.”



At Brewer-Clifton, there is an utmost respect for nature. We believe that when working with a product of nature, it is necessary to always maintain an awareness of the elements and phenomena that are beyond our total understanding and control. If at any time that level of sensitivity is lessened, we risk the unavoidable degradation of the very goals that we are trying to pursue. As such, any intervention in the natural evolution of the product must be carried out with the utmost attentiveness and care.

Grapes are harvested at their physiological ripeness, and are fastidiously sorted in the vineyard. The fruit is subsequently transported to the winery as expeditiously as possible so as to

retain the coolness of the morning air in which they were picked.

Pinot Noir is fermented 100% as whole clusters of grapes, and typically remains in fermenter for a total of 30 to 35 days - 7 days cold soak, 2 weeks of fermentation, then 10 or more days of extended maceration. From the press, the resulting wine is bucketed directly to barrel. Barrels from the Sirugue cooperage in Nuits St Georges are exclusively used.

Throughout fermentation, we work to keep all of the elements of the system suspended and in contact with one another. This is done to fully capture all of the essence and extractable flavors, colors and tannins from the fruit. Following fermentation, the wine will naturally shed itself of unwanted solids which will slowly settle to the bottom of the barrel in which it rests. The wine remains in contact with those lees for as long as possible, to maximize the wine's elevelage.

Racking is carried out by gravity, at the beginning of the waning moon following Summer Solstice. It is during this period that the wine is most settled. The gravitational influence of the lunar cycle is clearly evident in the tides, the sap in trees, the fluids in our bodies and all other liquid forms.

It is within the rows of the vineyard that wine is made. It is Brewer-Clifton's primary goal and priority to deliver the essence of that vineyard as clearly and honestly as possible. While the wines with which we are fortunate to work will be associated with the Brewer-Clifton name, it is ultimately the name of the vineyard which holds the greatest importance.