

# JEB DUNNUCK

## Jeb Dunnuck Reviews October 2018

### **2016 Chardonnay Block UU – Bien Nacido – 94 Points**

The 2016 Chardonnay Bien Nacido Block UU comes from a great vineyard located just east of the town of Santa Maria and was brought up in 20% new French oak. A classic Bien Nacido bouquet of honeyed orchard fruits, crushed rocks, oyster shells, and white flowers flow to a rich, beautifully textured, concentrated Chardonnay that has everything you could want from this variety. With terrific balance, nicely integrated acidity, and a great finish, it's brilliant stuff that should evolve gracefully for 5-7 years.

### **2016 Chardonnay – Tinaquaic Vineyard – 94 Points**

The 2016 Chardonnay Tinaquaic Vineyard comes from a site in the Santa Maria Valley and was aged 25% new 500-liter French oak barrels. This medium gold-colored effort offers a classic orchard fruit, white flower, brioche, and mineral-laced bouquet. It's medium to full-bodied, has beautiful purity of fruit and integrated acidity, with the rounded, sexy style of the vintage front and center.

### **2016 Chenin Blanc – Ernesto Wickenden Vineyard – 91 Points**

A variety you don't see very often from California (which is a shame, as it does quite nicely), the 2016 Chenin Blanc offers a clean, crisp, medium-bodied style as well as lovely notes of green citrus, mint, leafy herbs, and hints of minerality. I'd drink bottles over the coming couple of year but certainly would be unsurprised to see it age gracefully for over a decade.

### **2016 Pinot Noir Block 8 – Bien Nacido Vineyard – 95 Points**

Moving to the Pinot Noirs, the 2016 Pinot Noir Block 8 Bien Nacido is a beauty that was brought up all in 3- and 4-year-old barrels. Sporting a vivid ruby/purple-tinged color as well as notes of wild strawberries, black raspberries, scorched earth, forest floor, and salty minerality, this beauty hits the palate with medium-bodied depth and richness, vibrant acidity, and a fresh, focused core that's mostly covered by the upfront 2016 fruit. I love its purity and vibrancy, and while you can certainly drink this beauty today, it's going to evolve gracefully on its balance.

### **2016 Pinot Noir Block 43 – Bien Nacido Vineyard – 95 Points**

The 2016 Pinot Noir Block 43 Bien Nacido comes from a single block in the Bien Nacido Vineyard and was aged 17 months in one-third new French oak. It's not far from the Block 8 cuvée yet has slightly more new oak as well as beautiful cassis and

strawberry fruits, spice box, violets, and crushed rocks. Voluptuous and sexy on the palate, with a stacked mid-palate, this beauty fills the mouth with fruit and displays no hard edges, nicely integrated acidity, and a beautifully pure, balance style

### **2016 Pinot Noir – Julia's Vineyard – 96 Points**

The 2016 Pinot Noir Julia's Vineyard comes from another cool site in the Santa Maria Valley and was raised in 46% new French oak. It has a more classic, evolved, complex style as well as lovely notes of forest floor, ripe cherry and raspberry fruits, dried spices, and dried orange peel. Seamless and elegant on the palate, with no hard edges, perfect balance, and ultra-fine tannin, it's a thrilling Pinot Noir that's going to keep for 10-15 years. Bravo!

### **2016 Pinot Noir – Solomon Hills Vineyard – 93 Points**

Strawberries, violets, citrus blossom, and some exotic passion fruit characteristics all emerge from the 2016 Pinot Noir Solomon Hills Vineyard, a pretty, elegant, perfumed wine that has tons to love. Possessing medium-bodied richness, nicely integrated acidity, and a clean finish, it's one of the more vibrant, racy wines in the lineup. Give bottles 2-3 years of bottle age and it will keep for 10-15 years or more. This cuvée spent 17 months in one-third new French oak.

### **2016 Pinot Noir – John Sebastiano Vineyard – 92+ Points**

Slightly darker colored, the 2016 Pinot Noir John Sebastiano Vineyard (17 months in 40% new French oak) is a much bigger, richer Pinot Noir that offers lots of black cherry and blackberry fruits intermixed with spice, forest floor, and a distinct salty minerality. It too is juicy and racy on the palate, with high yet integrated acidity. It's a beautiful wine, yet like the Solomon Hills releases, it needs 2-3 years of bottle age.

### **2016 Pinot Noir – La Encantada Vineyard – 94 Points**

From a site on the southern side of the Sta. Rita Hills, the 2016 Pinot Noir La Encantada Vineyard (17 months in 40% new French oak) has a medium ruby color as well as a spicy, underbrush, and forest floor-scented profile. Possessing beautiful strawberry and raspberry fruits, medium body, bright yet integrated acidity, and a beautiful finish, it can be enjoyed any time over the coming 15 years or more. If you can, give it a year or two of bottle age.

### **2015 Cuvée Jeanne Marie – 92 Points**

The 2015 Cuvée Jeanne Marie checks in as 60% Grenache, 23% Syrah and the rest Mourvèdre, all from the Williamson-Dore Vineyard outside of Los Olivos. It's a sappy, vibrant, juicy red that has lots of Syrah-like darker berry fruits, peppery herbs, and tapenade notes, medium-bodied richness, nicely integrated acidity, and beautiful purity of fruit. Drink it over the coming 5-7 years.

### **2015 Syrah – Tinaquaic Vineyard – 94+ Points**

The 2015 Syrah Tinaquaic Vineyard (there's 7% Viognier in the blend) sports a seriously inky purple color as well as a beautiful bouquet of blackberries,

blueberries, crushed rocks, camphor, and ground pepper. This beauty is medium to full-bodied, has remarkable purity of fruit, and building structure, all while still carrying plenty of fruit and richness. It's going to benefit from 2-3 years of bottle age and cruise for a decade or more. It's a brilliant Syrah.

### **2015 Syrah – Williamson-Dore Vineyard – 95 Points**

From the Los Olivos District in Santa Barbara County and based on 97% Syrah and 3% Roussanne, the 2015 Syrah Williamson-Dore Vineyard has an exotic, sexy bouquet of bacon fat, lavender, plums, black olives, and ripe blackberry and blueberry fruit. Deep, rich, and powerful, with a voluptuous style on the palate, it has a broad, expansive texture, sweet (yet present) tannins, and a big finish. This tour de force in Syrah needs 3-4 years of bottle age to integrate its oak élevage and will cruise for a decade in the cellaring.

### **2015 Cabernet Sauvignon – Los Potreros – 91 Points**

The 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Los Potreros is all Cabernet from Starelane and Grimms Bluff Vineyard in the Happy Canyon region of Santa Barbara County. Slightly deeper colored than the Range 30 West release, this medium to full-bodied effort has classic notes of crème de cassis, bouquet garni, tobacco, and lead pencil. With a juicy, lively style, excellent overall balance, and notable structure, it can be drunk today or cellared for over a decade.

### **2015 Cabernet Franc – Tinaquaic Vineyard – 93 Points**

The 2015 Cabernet Franc Tinaquaic Vineyard (87% Cabernet Franc and 13% Petit Verdot) comes all from the Tinaquaic Vineyard in the Santa Maria Valley and was aged 22 months in 50% new American oak barrels. Its deep ruby/purple color is followed by a fabulous bouquet of crème de cassis, crushed flowers, violets, and spice. Possessing medium to full-bodied richness, fine, elegant tannins, and a great finish, it needs a year or two of bottle age and will keep for 10-15 years.

## **Jeb Dunnuck Reviews August 2017**

### **2015 Pinot Noir Block 43 – Bien Nacido Vineyard – 94 Points**

One of the riper, richer wines in the lineup, the 2015 Pinot Noir Block 43 Bien Nacido offers beautiful notes of framboise, dried spices and earth, with full-bodied richness, a rounded, textured and mouth filling style and a great finish. In a vintage that yields mostly hard, austere wines, this offers fruit!

### **2015 Pinot Noir Block 8 – Bien Nacido Vineyard – 92 Points**

A big step up over the Santa Maria Valley release, the 2015 Pinot Noir Block 8 Bien Nacido offers a terrific bouquet of black cherries, saddle leather, spice-box and dried herbs. It's fresh, nicely concentrated and textured, with good acidity, and will benefit from short term cellaring.

### **2015 Pinot Noir Fe Ciega Vineyard – 92 points**

The 2015 Pinot Noir Fe Ciega Vineyard is reserved aromatically, yet offers solid notes of black raspberries, barnyard, spice and dusty earth. Medium-bodied, fresh and lively on the palate, with bright, yet integrated acidity. It's a beautiful wine I'd happily drink anytime over the coming 7-8 years.

#### **2015 Pinot Noir John Sebastiano Vineyard – 90 points**

Reminding me of Premier Cru from the northern part of Burgundy with its darker cherry, saddle leather, and sappy floral aromas and flavors, the 2015 Pinot Noir John Sebastiano Vineyard is medium-bodied, supple and seamless on the palate. It drops off too quickly on the finish, but it's still a beautiful wine. This site lies on the eastern edge of the Sta. Rita Hills, and the 2015 spent 17 months in 36% new French oak.

#### **2015 Pinot Noir Julia's Vineyard – 91 Points**

The 2015 Pinot Noir Julia's Vineyard is another forward, sexy, straight up charming wine. It lacks the focus and definition of some of the other cuvées, yet has loads of strawberry and raspberry fruit, medium to full-bodied richness, a mouth filling texture and a good finish. Drink it over the coming 4-6 years.

#### **2015 Pinot Noir La Encantada Vineyard – 92 Points**

Christmas spice, peppery mint, candied cherries and hints of strawberries all emerge from the 2015 Pinot Noir La Encantada Vineyard, and it's another beautiful, elegant, seamless Pinot Noir from this terrific estate. However, like too many 2015s, it drops off on the finish, yet the tannin is beautifully managed and I suspect it will evolve gracefully.

#### **2015 Pinot Noir Solomon Hills Vineyard – 92 Points**

I also loved the 2015 Pinot Noir Solomon Hills Vineyard, and it's a broad, expansive red that shows the power and fruit-forward style of the vineyard. Kirsch, framboise, dried tea and spice aromas and flavors all emerge from this beauty, and it's already drinking nicely, yet will easily keep through 2025.

#### **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Los Potreros- 92 points**

One of my favorites in the lineup, the 2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Los Potreros (100% Cabernet Sauvignon aged in 50% new French oak) has plenty of darker currant fruits, scorched earth and toasted spice, with subtle menthol nuances, medium to full-bodied richness, juicy acidity and a clean finish. It's a polished, balanced, impressive Cabernet from this team to drink over the coming 10-15 years.

#### **2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Mamère Vineyard- 90 points**

All the Foxen Bordeaux blends are released under the Foxen 7200 label. Notes of eucalyptus, black currants, underbrush and violets all emerge from the 2014 Cabernet Sauvignon Mamere Vineyard, and its juicy, nicely textured and balanced on the palate, with the more charming style of the vintage front and center. With

chalky minerality and fine tannin on the finish, it should evolve positively for 2-4 years and keep for a decade.

**2014 Range 30 West – 91 points**

From the McGinley and Vogelzang vineyards, the 2014 Range 30 West (a blend of 61% Cabernet Franc and 39% Merlot, aged 22 months in 44% new French oak) is another juicy, perfumed, elegant wine from the team at Foxen. Possessing lots of black raspberries, mint, leafy herbs and spice-box aromas and flavors, it's medium to full-bodied, has integrated, juicy acidity and sweet tannin. Drink it over the coming decade.

**2013 Cabernet Sauvignon Mamère Vineyard- 90 points**

Mint, eucalyptus, plum and assorted dark fruits dominate the 2013 Cabernet Sauvignon Mamere Vineyard, and it's a singular, unique expression of Cabernet Sauvignon. With medium to full-bodied richness, sweet tannin and good freshness, drink it anytime over the coming decade or more.