



## Terroir

### **The Secret of St. Francis Winery & Vineyards Success**

Viticultural enthusiasts have come to regard the natural phenomenon of *terroir* as the factor between a great vineyard and a merely good or reliable one. St. Francis Winery & Vineyards was founded and developed on this philosophy – ultimately, it is the secret behind St. Francis’ continued success.

*Terroir* refers to the total natural environment of any region, and by extension to the individual characteristics of each vineyard, right down to the molecules that circulate around the vines themselves. Its defining components are soil, topography, macroclimate, mesoclimate and vine microclimate. Each patch of ground has its own relation to sunlight, altitude, slope, aspect, geology and soil-water ratios. The sum of these elements grants each grape-growing site a uniqueness, which is reflected in the wines produced from fruit that flourishes there.

An important aspect of *terroir* is that not all winegrowing sites are created equal – one that is ideally suited to Pinot Noir, for example the Burgundy region, may produce inferior Zinfandel. *Terroir* determines the potential for greatness of the grapes grown in a given are. When the appropriate grape is nurtured within just the right *terroir*, magic happens.

It’s no accident the concept of *terroir* originated in France, for there are few places in the world that boast macro- and microclimates that nurture such world-class grapes. Sonoma County, the home of St. Francis, is a remarkably rich agricultural community with winegrowing capabilities that approach the standard set by France. Sonoma County provides winegrowers with a “*terroir tapestry*”. For example, the Behler Vineyard, St. Francis’ original 100 acre site, rests in the upper valley, where daytime temperatures are moderate and the inland fog has a cooling effect. The wild Oak Vineyard sits at the base of Hood Mountain and has alluvial fans and terraces on its upper portion. The Nuns Canyon Vineyard is based on a steep hillside, above the fog line. The Lagomarsino Vineyard extends east from the Russian River Valley floor to the rolling hills and experiences good west and southwest exposure.

While each vineyard has a different microclimate, they are all part of the Sonoma County macroclimate that is superbly suited to the growing of wine grapes. St. Francis firmly believes in the power of *terroir* and is committed to the nurturing of superlative grapes in the right places to let their natural qualities shine.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Tom Mackay". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Director of Winemaking**