

# BLACK KITE

## CELLARS

### PINOT NOIR

#### 2013 KITE'S REST PINOT NOIR, ANDERSON VALLEY

**92PTS** Black Kite's remarkable Pinot patch in the Anderson Valley is divided into distinctive blocks that each produce a stunning and unique expression of Pinot Noir from vintage to vintage. Then there is Kite's Rest, which is a blend of the blocks crafted by winemaker Jeff Gaffner. The 2013 is a beautiful blend that exhibits bright aromas of raspberry and strawberry, with a cola note in the background and earthy minerality. The tannins are slightly grippy, but this will resolve with time in the cellar.

– Robert Whitley, *Wine Review Online*

**91PTS** This sophisticated and compelling wine combines full body and a muscular texture with very tasty, solid fruit flavors. The balance between acidity, tannin and flavor is good, and the finish is tangy and lingering. – *Wine Enthusiast*

**90PTS** 14.7% alc., pH 3.50, TA 0.60, 995 cases. Dijon 114 and 115 and Pommard clones planted at Kite's Rest Vineyard. Aged 11 months in French oak barrels, 33% new. • Moderate reddish purple color in the glass. Highly aromatic, offering scents of macerated cherry, peppery spice and a hint of toast. The wine offers a forward drinking essence of cherry fruit framed by modest tannins and a measured riff of oak. Upbeat and easy to like, with a silky mouthfeel and a timid but flavorful finish. The lightest weight wine in the 2013 Black Kite lineup, but not at all wimpy.

– Rusty Gaffney, *Prince of Pinot*

#### 2013 REDWOODS' EDGE PINOT NOIR, ANDERSON VALLEY

**93PTS** Redwoods' Edge is another in a fine string of Pinots from Black Kite in the very good 2013 vintage. This example exhibits an earthy nose, with hints of

cola and forest floor and a touch of oak vanillin. On the palate it shows good balance, layers of ripe black raspberry and blackberry, with firm tannins that will lose their edge after another year or two in the bottle.

– Robert Whitley, *Wine Review Online*

**92PTS** If slightly quiet at first pass, yet possessed of very solid Pinot Noir credentials and rich in crème brûlée oak, this nose never stints on the range, depth or richness of top bottlings. It is supple, quite full in feel with the tighter underbelly that shows up in most of the Black Kite bottlings from 2013, and its deep black cherry fruit stays the course even as youthful tannin makes itself known at the finish. It is tasty enough today to go with savory roasts and can age for a bit as well. – Charles Olken, *Connoisseur's Guide*

**91PTS** This wine is bold and full bodied, big enough for a grilled steak, with powerful ripe fruit flavors like black cherry and blackberry. Firm-enough tannins add grip to the texture, with slightly smoky, peppery accents on the finish. – *Wine Enthusiast*

**90pts** Enticingly delicate, with attractive lavender and floral scents, fine-grained tannins and a mix of raspberry, cherry, plum and light loamy earth flavors. Ends clean and persistent, retaining grace. Drink now.

– Jim Laube, *Wine Spectator*

**90PTS** 14.8% alc., pH 3.60, TA 0.58, 335 cases (6 bottles each). Dijon 114 and 115 clones planted at Kite's Rest Vineyard. 321 feet elevation, north facing, loam soils. Yields 1.5-2.0 tons per acre. Aged 11 months in French oak barrels, 50% new. • Moderately light reddish purple color in the glass. Aromas of macerated dark cherries and spicy, smoky oak lead to a charming medium-bodied core of cherry and huckleberry fruit flavors underlain with smoky oak and a touch of umami. The tannins are balanced and the finish is courageous and juicy. The wine is lavishly oaked and shows a slight bit of alcoholic warmth on the finish, but still has a lot to recommend.

– Rusty Gaffney, *Prince of Pinot*

#### 2013 STONY TERRACE PINOT NOIR, ANDERSON VALLEY

**96PTS** Winemaker Jeff Gaffner's hot streak with Pinot from the 2013 vintage continues with this blockbuster from Black Kite. Stony Terrace exhibits that rare tension between fruit, tannin and acid that delivers exquisite balance. The palate is layered with aromas of black raspberry and fragrant strawberry, notes of spice, cola and earth, with firm grip that indicates the potential for long life.

– Robert Whitley, *Wine Review Online*

### 2013 STONY TERRACE PINOT NOIR, ANDERSON VALLEY (CONT.)

**93PTS** 14.8% alc., pH 3.60, TA 0.58, 350 cases (6 bottles each), \$60. Pommard clone grown at Kite's Rest Vineyard. Elevation 217 feet, north facing, gravelly loam soils, yields 1.0-2.5 tons per acre. Aged 11 months in French oak barrels, 50% new. • Moderate reddish purple color in the glass. Very fragrant, with aromas of black cherry, black raspberry, woodlands, sous-bois and a floral note elevating from the glass. Inviting richness of darker cherry and berry flavors are backed by mildly firm tannins and juicy acidity. Silky in the mouth, with a vibrant and flavorful finish that really hangs on. – *Rusty Gaffney, Prince of Pinot*

**93PTS** A touch of rosemary and other savory nuances add complexity to the classic cherry, mushroom and forest-floor impressions in this full-bodied and fascinating wine. Firm tannins and supportive acidity are balanced by a sense of lushness in the texture. The finish is long and delicious. – *Wine Enthusiast*

**91PTS** Medium-light ruby; attractive, deep, earthy, spicy, raspberry, cherry, and blackberry fruit aroma with hints of sandalwood and tobacco leaf; medium to medium-full body; rich, textured, nicely balanced, red and black fruit flavors with bright acidity and a hint of cola; medium tannin; lingering aftertaste. Shows some elegance and very appealing to drink now. Very highly recommended. 14.8% alcohol; 175 cases; 100% PN. – *California Grapevine*

### 2013 RIVER TURN PINOT NOIR, ANDERSON VALLEY

**93PTS** River Turn from this vintage impresses with its density and brooding earthiness. The fruit profile runs to the dark side, and there is a strong wood note that gives the wine warmth and a hint of spice. Yet there is every reason to think this wine has much more to give but will only express its buried treasure with considerable time in the cellar. This is a Pinot to lay down for at least another two to five years. That's not advice you often hear in connection with most California Pinot. – *Robert Whitley, Wine Review Online*

**93PTS** Effusive and inviting fruit and spice aromas plus tangy, tasty black-cherry and cranberry flavors inhabit this full-bodied, beautifully focused wine. It's solidly balanced, not at all shy about oak flavors and engagingly complex. Drink now through 2020. – *Wine Enthusiast*

**92PTS** 14.6% alc., pH 3.45, TA 0.62, 352 cases (6 bottles each), \$60. Pommard clone planted at Kite's Rest Vineyard. Elevation 130 feet, north facing, sandy and silty loam soils, yields 2.5 tons per acre. Aged 11 months in French oak barrels, 50% new. • Moderately light reddish purple color in the glass. Initially shy aromas of oak-kissed black cherry fruit pick up intensity over time in the glass. Intense attack of cherry and strawberry fruit with an earthy bent. Structured with well-proportioned tannins, a measured use of oak, and an edgy, generous and lengthy finish. – *Rusty Gaffney, Prince of Pinot*

**91PTS** Medium-light ruby; fragrant, cranberry and black cherry fruit aroma with light smoky notes and hints of cinnamon and Asian spices; medium to medium-full body; soft, supple, earthy, well balanced, elegantly styled, red and black fruit flavors; medium to medium-full tannin; lingering after-taste. Easy to drink now. Very highly recommended. 14.6% alcohol; 176 cases; 100% PN. – *California Grapevine*

**91PTS** The firmest of the Black Kite Pinots, this one shows particularly well in the nose where its well-defined, vigorous red cherry fruit is joined by the nicely mated richness of crème brûlée oak and a whiff of dried twigs. Full-bodied and yet fairly lively, it is supple and inviting at the front of the palate and firmly structured from middle to finish without let up despite some coarse edges that come into play. With both enticing character and sturdy framing, this is a wine for the future, and we would not be averse to cellar time of five or six years. – *Charles Olken, Connoisseur's Guide*

### 2013 ANGEL HAWK PINOT NOIR, ANDERSON VALLEY

**93PTS** 14.6% alc., pH 3.40, TA 0.60, 163 cases. Released February 2016. Dijon 114 and 115 and Pommard clones. 2-day cold soak, inoculated with RC212 yeast and punched down three times daily. After fermentation, the wine first rested for 10 months in a mix of 33% new and 1-year-old French oak barrels. The best barrels were aged for another 12 months for a total of 22 months in barrel. • Moderately light cherry red color in the glass. The nose is practically orgasmic, offering soaring aromas of dark red grapes, berries and cherries accompanied by a woodland scent. The rich core of cherry, raspberry and cranberry fruits are well-spiced and are accented with weighted notes of anise and caramel. Bold, yet charming, with good restraint and guile. – *Rusty Gaffney, Prince of Pinot*

### 2013 ANGEL HAWK PINOT NOIR, ANDERSON VALLEY (CONT.)

**92PTS** Medium-light ruby; attractive, forward, spicy, strawberry and black cherry fruit aroma that developed depth and some complexity as it aired in the glass; medium to medium-full body; deep, rich, elegant, red and black fruit flavors with bright acidity and a hint of cola; medium to medium-full tannin; lingering aftertaste. Deserves a few more years of bottle aging. Very highly recommended. 14.6% alcohol; 163 cases; 100% PN. – *California Grapevine*

### 2013 SOBERANES VINEYARD PINOT NOIR, SANTA LUCIA HIGHLANDS

**95PTS** The Santa Lucia Highlands arrived late to the Pinot Noir party, but better late than never. These days this region at the northern tip of Monterey County is on a par with the more hallowed Russian River Valley and not as prone to vintage variation. Black Kite's effort from the Soberanes Vineyard in the 2013 vintage is impressive, showing complex layers of black cherry, raspberry and strawberry fruit, with a subtle spice note in the background and firm but nicely integrated grape tannins. Give this wine another three to five years to show its best.  
– *Robert Whitley, Wine Review Online*

**92PTS** 14.8% alc., pH 3.60, TA 0.58, 423 cases. Pisoni clone. Aged 11 months in French oak barrels, 33% new. • Moderate reddish purple color in the glass. Very engaging nose offering hi-tone aromas of cherries, red berries and latte. Succulent on the palate, with flavors of pie cherry, red berries and cola dancing in harmony with a deft touch of oak. Impressive harmony and a consuming finish that seems to last and last.  
– *Rusty Gaffney, Prince of Pinot*

**92PTS** Cinnamon and spearmint elements give depth to the pinpoint, laser-sharp fruit notes of cherry blossom and strawberry on this bottling. Strong herbal flavors of thyme and marjoram and spices of green cardamom of peppercorn hit the palate right away, seasoning cranberry and pomegranate fruit, and finishing on a slate minerality. – *Wine Enthusiast*

**90PTS** Medium-light to medium ruby; attractive, earthy, cedary, spicy, black cherry and red berry fruit aroma with hints of milk chocolate and forest floor; medium to medium-full body; forward, rich, fleshy, red and black fruit flavors with herbal notes and a hint of cola; medium tannin; lingering aftertaste. Developed depth and some complexity as it aired in the glass. Very highly recommended. 14.8% alcohol; 423 cases; 100% PN. – *California Grapevine*

### 2013 GAP'S CROWN PINOT NOIR, SONOMA COAST

**95PTS** Black Kite's best Pinots typically come from the winery's phenomenal Anderson Valley vineyard, but winemaker Jeff Gaffner can ring the bell even when Black Kite sources grapes from other vineyard sites. This Gap's Crown from the Sonoma Coast is a sensational Pinot that offers impressive dimension. It is beautifully structured and suave on the palate, with deep aromas of raspberry and blueberry as well as an intriguing spice note on the finish.  
– *Robert Whitley, Wine Review Online*

**91PTS** Firm and rich without being weighty, this features tannins that add grip and density to the forest floor and earthy components, given voice by notes of blackberry and blueberry. Long and lingering on the finish. Drink now through 2022.  
– *Jim Laube, Wine Spectator*

**91PTS** From the producer best known for its own Anderson Valley estate wines, this Pinot is varietally rustic in pine needle, dark, baked plum and smoky oak, the oak stylistically reminiscent of many of its other wines. Mellowed acidity complements the burliness and ripeness of the fruit before a lengthy, Asian-spiced finish. – *Wine Enthusiast*

**91PTS** Even with hints of dried cherries and cranberries in its aromas, this wine is guided first by youthfully alive scents of fresh red cherries, a slight dusty rose aspect and creamy, rich oak. Full on the palate and supple in feel, it is admittedly a mouthful of flavor that does not quit and earns its high regard both for its depth and for its Pinot Noir texture. It does have a layer of tannin that gives it a useful bit of grip, but the wine is so expressive even now that it could be enjoyed at this still-developing but delicious current state if that is your wont.  
– *Charles Olken, Connoisseur's Guide*

**91PTS** 14.8% alc., pH 3.60, TA 0.58, 273 cases, \$60. Dijon 777 clone. Aged 11 months in French oak barrels, 33% new. • Moderately light reddish purple color in the glass. I loved the nose which extended aromas of black cherry, dark red raspberry, redwood and anise. An appealing wine with impeccably balanced t'n'a, a creamy mouthfeel, and a noticeable top note of oak.  
– *Rusty Gaffney, Prince of Pinot*

### 2013 GAP'S CROWN PINOT NOIR, SONOMA COAST (CONT.)

**91PTS** Medium-light ruby color; attractive, forward, cranberry and raspberry fruit aroma with floral notes and hints of clove and cinnamon; medium body; spicy, fleshy, red fruit flavors that tend to be a bit tight on the finish; medium tannin; lingering aftertaste. Nicely balanced and showing some elegance and complexity as it developed with airing in the glass. Deserves several more years of bottle aging. Very highly recommended. 14.8% alcohol; 273 cases; 100% Pinot Noir (PN).

– *California Grapevine*

## CHARDONNAY

### 2014 GAP'S CROWN VINEYARD CHARDONNAY, SANTA LUCIA HIGHLANDS

**94PTS** 14.2% alc., pH 3.40, TA 0.62, 201 cases. Dijon 76, 95 and 96. Aged 10 months in French oak barrels, 40% new. • Moderately light golden yellow color and clear in the glass. Highly aromatic with a perfume that sustains over a lengthy time in the glass, featuring lemon cake, pear, nutty pastry creme and clarified butter. This wine comes at you with a flavor stick, exploding on the palate with flavors of lemon, pineapple, peach, pear and a hint of spice and vanilla. Impressive harmony, with a slightly viscous demeanor, and a really long, lip-smacking finish.

– *Rusty Gaffney, Prince of Pinot*

**93PTS** 2014 Gap's Crown Vineyard Chardonnay "Exhibits a charming mix of buttery oak, rich fruit, baking spice nuances and an overall sense of harmony and finesse. The core apple, melon and apricot flavors are intense without being weighty, and the finish displays a measure of grace." – *Jim Laube, Wine Spectator*

**91PTS** Medium-light golden yellow; attractive, fragrant, spicy, tangerine and green apple aroma with a hint of lychee; medium-full body; rich, fleshy, citrus and green apple flavors with a slight hint of residual sugar and a stylish creaminess in the mouthfeel; lingering aftertaste. Very highly recommended. 14.1% alcohol; 201 cases; 100% Chardonnay; 100% BF; 100% ML. – *California Grapevine*

### 2014 SOBERANES VINEYARD CHARDONNAY, SANTA LUCIA HIGHLANDS

**92PTS** 14.3% alc., pH 3.40, TA 0.60, 212 cases. Wente clone. Aged 10 months in French oak barrels, 40% new.

Moderately light golden yellow color and clear in the glass. Rather subdued but pleasant aromas of lemon-lime, chalk dust and crushed rock. Not as boisterous as the Gap's Crown and more imbued with salty green apple notes to accompany the flavors of lemon, white peach and caramel. Very smooth on the palate and slightly creamy on the finish.

– *Rusty Gaffney, Pinot File*

**92PTS** Medium-light golden yellow; attractive, intense, fragrant, earthy, mandarin orange and white peach aroma with mineral notes and hints of honey-suckle and orange blossom; medium-full body; crisp, citrusy, melon, apple and stone fruit flavors with bright acidity and a silky mouthfeel; lingering aftertaste. Not quite as rich and creamy as Lucia's Soberanes bottling though still very appealing with stylish elegance and some complexity as it developed with airing in the glass. Very highly recommended. 14.3% alcohol; 212 cases; 100% Chardonnay; 100% BF; 100% ML. – *California Grapevine*

### 2014 SIERRA MAR VINEYARD CHARDONNAY, SANTA LUCIA HIGHLANDS

**93PTS** 14.1% alc., pH 3.40, TA 0.62, 264 cases, \$48. Wente clone. Aged 10 months in French oak barrels, 40% new. • Moderately light golden yellow color and clear in the glass. Clean aromas of lemon oil, citrus blossom, vanilla and marzipan. An abundance of citrus spearheads the flavor profile, complimented by notes of pain grille, caramel, butter brickle and pear. Pinpoint balance with a juicy finish that offers a hint of salinity. – *Rusty Gaffney, Prince of Pinot*

**91PTS** Medium-light golden yellow; attractive, fragrant, spicy, tangerine and green apple aroma with a hint of lychee; medium-full body; rich, fleshy, citrus and green apple flavors with a slight hint of residual sugar and a stylish creaminess in the mouthfeel; lingering aftertaste. Very highly recommended. 14.1% alcohol; 264 cases; 100% Chardonnay; 100% BF; 100% ML.

– *California Grapevine*

