

ELK COVE VINEYARDS

2016 La Bohème



VINTAGE 2016 was a year of unusual weather that led to beautiful fruit at lower than average yields. In spring, an early heat spike meant a very condensed time frame for bloom. This gave us smaller than average berries and clusters and set us on the path for our third early harvest in a row. Thankfully, summer weather was cooler than average, which slowed down ripening and allowed flavor development to catch up to sugar accumulation. Due to our small initial crop estimates, we held off thinning until the last minute to delay ripening and add “hang-time”, an important factor in the development of complex flavors.

We were a little stunned when our first fruit hit the crush-pad in the last days of August, setting a record for our earliest harvest in 40 years. September and October brought relief from the heat with mild evenings and cool nights that allowed for slow, even ripening. We picked fruit that was absolutely pristine and perfectly ripe, at a gradual pace that allowed us to give our full attention to each block and work shorter hours than in a typical harvest season.

We are optimistic that 2016 will be an outstanding vintage, reminiscent of 2012 and 2014, with wines that show great balance and concentration.

VINEYARD: We planted La Bohème Vineyard in 1985 by selecting the very best vines from our original Estate Pommard plantings. Pat and Joe Campbell named the vineyard after the family who sold them the property – and their favorite Puccini opera. This picturesque vineyard overlooks the winery and the coast range mountains and rises to 800 feet, making it one of the highest elevation vineyard sites in the Willamette Valley. La Bohème was planted using cuttings from vines selected for small cluster size and intense flavors, hallmarks of the world’s finest Pinot Noirs. We prune and cluster-thin La Bohème heavily to limit yields and to maximize ripening and flavor concentration.

WINEMAKING: All of Elk Cove’s delicate Pinot Noir fruit undergoes the same gentle handling through our gravity flow system. This allows us to achieve the elegance, texture and luscious quality that are the hallmarks of exquisite Pinot Noir.

Fruit from the La Bohème vineyard is fermented in small, temperature controlled steel tanks, hand punched down twice daily then aged for ten months in 29% new French oak. Our winemaking team then selects the very best barrels to represent the silky, lush flavor profile that exemplifies La Bohème Pinot Noir.

TASTING NOTES: With tart cherry, fir boughs, tea and saffras on the nose, this wine has a lush and mouth-filling palate. It brims with black cherry and dried plum. Spicy notes of black pepper and anise lead to a long finish of dusty tannins.

VITICULTURE & ENOLOGY:

Vine Age: 16-30 years
Harvest Sugars: 24 brix
Vatting: Fermentation in small open top
steel fermentors.
10 months in 20% new French oak.
pH: 3.6
TA: 5.5
Alc: 14% v/v
Bottled August 2017
Cases Produced: 741

REVIEWS:

92 Points - *Robert Parker's Wine Advocate (August, 2018)*

“... a great open nose of warm black cherries and blackcurrant with touches of cardamom, cinnamon stick, dried leaves and forest floor. Light to medium-bodied, it fills the mouth with warm, spice-laced black fruits, framed with firm, fine-grained tannins and mouthwatering acidity, finishing long with earth and spicy accents.” - E.B.