

ELK COVE

VINEYARDS

2018 Clay Court



VINTAGE 2018's growing season started hot and dry through spring and summer, but relief was just around the corner. A hearty rain weeks before harvest and cool temperatures in September and October slowed ripening and gave the fruit additional hang-time. Harvest came late with small, intensely flavored berries with a high skin-to-juice ratio. After a slow start, the second half of harvest saw the simultaneous ripening of multiple blocks and a veritable “crush” in the fermentation hall. Once again, we were thankful for the added capacity of our 2013 cellar expansion and a crew of seasoned pros in the vineyard and the cellar.

These are wines of ample flavors and high maturity levels. The Pinot Noirs are bold and fruit-forward with higher than average tannins. In the white wines, expect more tropical fruit aromas in addition to the classic stone-fruit aromas. This is a great vintage for those who appreciate boldness in cool-climate varietals. 2018 wines are highly intriguing, their intense richness balanced by lifted tones, coming from a warm growing season that thankfully concluded in a cool autumn.

VINEYARD: Clay Court sits atop a picturesque hillside in the Parrett Mountain zone of the Chehalem Mountains AVA. This 15 acre all-Pinot-Noir vineyard was planted in 2001 with the classic Pommard and modern Dijon 115 and 777 clones of Pinot Noir. Clay Court was purchased by Elk Cove in 2009 and is the home of founders Joe and Pat Campbell – and their beloved tennis court! With gentle east-facing slopes, dark red Jory clay soils, and a proven track-record for producing high-quality Pinot Noirs, Clay Court Vineyard was immediately a great addition to Elk Cove's estate vineyards.

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.

Clay Court Pinot Noir fruit is fermented in small, temperature controlled steel tanks, hand punched down twice daily then aged for ten months in French oak. Our winemaking team then carefully blends the barrels most representative of the spicy flavors and concentrated red cherry fruit that characterizes this vineyard.

TASTING NOTES: With heaps of bright red raspberry and ripe cherry, this wine's freshness extends to a juicy palate. Sappy and bright, the red fruit sings alongside fine-grained tannins, iron, five spice and rosemary.

VITICULTURE & ENOLOGY:

Vine Age: 17 years
Harvest Sugars: 23 brix
Vatting: Fermentation in small open top steel fermentors. 10 months in 31% new French oak.
pH: 3.43
TA: 5.25
Alc: 13.5 v/v
Bottled July 2019
Cases Produced: 528

REVIEWS:

93 Points - *Vinous (August, 2020)*

“Concentrated yet lively on the palate, offering appealingly sweet, smoke-tinged raspberry, cherry liqueur, floral pastille and spicecake flavors... an appealing blend of power and finesse” - J.R.

94 Points - *Anthony Dias Blue (May, 2020)*

92 Points - *James Suckling (January, 2020)*

92 Points - *Wine Enthusiast (August, 2020)*