

ELK COVE VINEYARDS

2015 Pinot Noir Willamette Valley



VINTAGE 2015 brought ideal conditions, leading to generous yields and exceptionally concentrated fruit. An early spring and clear weather led to a solid bloom that was three weeks early. Thinning is such an important tool for us to influence the course of ripening, and due to large initial cropsets, one we fully utilized in 2015. We thinned in early summer at our higher elevation sites, but waited until veraison to thin our lower elevation sites to slow down ripening and add “hang-time,” an important factor in the development of complex flavors in Pinot Noir.

Harvest 2015 was the earliest on record for the Northern Willamette Valley and we were a little stunned when our first fruit hit the crushpad on September 8th. Autumn brought relief from the heat with mild evenings and cool rainless nights that allowed for slow, even ripening. We harvested fruit that was absolutely pristine and perfectly ripe, at a gradual pace that allowed us to give our full attention to each block.

We are hopeful that 2015 is equally as good as the spectacular 2012 and 2014 vintages, and early signs indicate just that, with the wines showing moderate alcohols, balanced acids and great concentration.

VINEYARD: Our Willamette Valley Pinot Noir is made with fruit from all five of our vineyard sites: Estate, Mount Richmond, Five Mountain, Clay Court and Windhill. We also purchase a small amount of select fruit from other producers who are longtime friends of Elk Cove. These sites are comprised of both Pomard and Dijon plant material, with multiple clones represented.

Because we draw from vineyards representing all three of the major Willamette Valley soil types, we are able to pick and choose for different flavor components to make the best possible blend each year for our Willamette Valley Pinot Noir. Some people call this making wine “spice rack” style, we usually just call it delicious. Our goal is the perfect version of what we believe a Willamette Valley Pinot should be : a wine with freshness of fruit, well-integrated alcohol, and great concentration of flavor.

WINEMAKING: To make our Willamette Valley Pinot Noir, fruit from each vineyard block is fermented separately in small, temperature controlled steel tanks, hand punched down twice daily, and barreled in 20% new french oak barrels. After 10 months of aging in 20% new oak, the wine we choose for the Willamette Valley Pinot is carefully blended to produce the most approachable, well-balanced Pinot Noir we make.

TASTING NOTES: A brambly nose of black currents, tart cherries, and violets is met with spicy cardamom and cinnamon. A core of juicy red cherry, cocoa nibs and leather on the palate is complemented by fine tannins evocative of dried leaves, pipe tobacco and anise.

VITICULTURE & ENOLOGY:

Vine Age: 5-41 years
Harvest Sugars: 23.5 brix
Vatting: Fermentation in small open top steel fermentors.
10 months in French oak
pH: 3.51
TA: 5.4
Alc: 13.5% v/v
Bottled August 2016
Cases Produced: 16,192

REVIEWS:

90 Points - *Purely Domestic Wine Report (November, 2017)*

“The nose is a supple yet focused red cherry with notes of warm tangy cranberry. The palate is firm on entry with a silky core of moderately expressive cherry and strawberry.” - D.W.

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