

ELK COVE

VINEYARDS

2023 Pinot Blanc



VINTAGE 2023 required experience and patience that was rewarded with essential hang-time and ripening.

The growing season started cool, then May sunshine brought an average bloom in mid-June followed by a glorious summer. We enjoyed many classic 80-degree Willamette Valley days, with nighttime highs staying down in the 50s even in August, typically the warmest month here in Oregon. The only exception to these consistent diurnal swings was a single big heat spike in mid-August. We anticipated picking in early September. However, some fortuitous rain events allowed us to push back harvest and we were thankful for the additional hang time.

Harvest came early, but not too early. We brought in beautiful fruit and we were pleased to still be picking Pinot noir into early October. When you have fast accumulation of fruit sugars, cool weather can be a welcome respite with even small amounts of rain helping the grapevines regulate and slow ripening. One of the reasons why Oregon Pinot Noir is so prized is for its freshness of fruit, and you can only get that vibrancy when it's under 50 degrees during picking.

2023 brought amazing fruit quality, but our production was down, especially on cool-climate white wines like Pinot Gris. Being an estate grown winery, we must follow Mother Nature's lead as we cannot buy fruit to increase production. Smaller yields do mean a smaller crop and less wine, but we embrace vintage variation. Another great benefit of being estate grown is that it's our decision exactly when to pick. Rather than rushing to bring fruit into the cellar, in 2023 we were able to play the odds and wait out the rain on blocks that needed additional hang time to get the flavor development we needed.

VINEYARD: The fruit for this Pinot Blanc is all hand-harvested from our own estate-grown hillside vines at our Five Mountain and Mount Richmond Vineyards.

WINEMAKING: The Willamette Valley has an ideal climate for Pinot Blanc, a delicate grape variety—enough sunlight and warmth for ripening, with cooler night temperatures that help retain varietal character. To preserve the freshness, our Pinot Blanc is whole-cluster pressed then fermented at very cool temperatures in small stainless steel tanks, all of which accentuates aromatics and enhances the richness and viscosity of the wine.

REVIEWS:

VITICULTURE & ENOLOGY:

Vine Age: 9-29 years

Harvest Sugars: 23 brix

Vatting: Whole-cluster pressed and cold fermented in small stainless steel tanks.

Alc: 13.5% v/v

2022 Pinot Blanc - 92 Points & Editors' Choice - *Wine Enthusiast* (Dec. 2023)

"The grapes used to make this dazzler were whole cluster-pressed and fermented in stainless steel. Peach and melon aromas are flanked by notes of honeysuckle and wet slate. Jittery acidity shines a spotlight on rich lemon butter, thyme and green tea flavors. This is one of the best Pinot Blancs I've had in a long time. Editors' Choice." —*Michael Alberty*

2021 Pinot Blanc - 92 Points - *Robert Parker's Wine Advocate* (May 2023)

2020 Pinot Blanc - 90 Points - *Wine Enthusiast* (Aug. 2020)