

ELK COVE VINEYARDS

2022 Clay Court



VINTAGE 2022 Mother Nature kept us on our toes with unusual weather at each end of the growing season. A wet, cold spring led into a long, temperate summer followed by a very sunny fall that brought us much-needed ripening.

What a surprise to have snowfall on April 11th, our region's latest significant snow since 1942! Most of our vines had not yet leafed out and their tight woolly buds were well-protected. However, frost damage did mean a smaller crop at our Clay Court Vineyard. Other vineyard sites set a healthy crop, which we thinned heavily to increase intensity and encourage ripening. August and September were unseasonably warm, but the nights remained cool, helping us retain varietal character. Worries of late-season botrytis (rot) meant extra passes of hand-work in the vineyard pulling leaves to improve sunlight penetration and airflow. Thankfully, October welcomed a long string of sunny days and just exactly the hang-time and ripening we needed to bring grape sugar (brix) to ideal levels.

Harvest began in late September, with most fruit harvested during two very intense mid-October weeks. Many of our blocks achieved peak ripeness at the same time, so we are very thankful for our incredible crew for all of the early morning picking sessions in the vineyard and long days in the cellar. Expect complex, fruit-forward wines from this vintage.

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: Lush and open with fresh raspberry, nutmeg and rose petal aromatics, this wine is juicy and supple with flavors of mixed berry pie, black cherry, cedar and mulling spices.

REVIEWS:

94 Points - *Decanter (June 2024)*

"From a hillside vineyard, Clay Court is on top of Parrett Mountain comes a beautifully balanced Pinot Noir. Ruby red-hued with great floral elegance, showy notes of dusty red berries, and a gravelly minerality. The palate is fleshy, red-fruited and delicious; a squeeze of blood orange brightens the affair; it's followed on by tart cranberries, green tea leaves and an array of savoury dried herbs, finishing with tart cherries and a hint of minerality." – *Clive Pursehouse*

92 Points - *Wine Enthusiast (Nov. 2024)*

91 Points - *Robert Parker Wine Advocate (July 2024)*

VITICULTURE & ENOLOGY:

Vine Age: 21 years

Harvest Sugars: 23.5 brix

Vatting: Fermentation in small open top steel fermentors. 10 months in 30% new

French oak.

Alc: 13.5 v/v

Cases Produced: 729

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