

ELK COVE

VINEYARDS

2023 Willamette Valley Pinot Noir Estate



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: Our Willamette Valley Pinot Noir is made with 100% estate grown fruit from all six of our vineyard sites: The Winery Estate, Mount Richmond, Five Mountain, Clay Court, Goodrich and Windhill. These sites are comprised of both Pommard 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 french oak barrels. After 10 months of aging in French oak, the wine we choose for our Willamette Valley Pinot Noir is carefully blended to produce the most approachable, well-balanced Pinot Noir we make.

VITICULTURE & ENOLOGY:

Harvest Sugars: 23.5 brix
Vatting: Fermentation in small open top steel fermentors. 10 months in French oak.
PH: 3.58
TA: 5.4
Alc: 13.5% v/v
Cases Produced: 15,733

REVIEWS:

2022 Willamette Valley Pinot Noir - 92 Points - *Wine Spectator (Feb. 2024)*

"Plump and generous, with raspberry and cranberry flavors that are accented with forest floor, clove and other dusky spices, finishing with refined tannins." - *Tim Fish*

2021 Willamette Valley Pinot Noir - 92 Points - *Robert Parker Wine Advocate (May 2023)*

2019 Willamette Valley Pinot Noir - 92 Points & Editors' Choice - *Wine Enthusiast (Dec. 2021)*