

2011 Pinot Noir Five Mountain



Elk Cove Vineyards purchased Five Mountain Vineyard in 2005 after leasing the site for several years. Previously it was exclusively used in our Willamette Valley blend, but after taking full control of the vineyard we have found certain lots worthy of Single Vineyard status. This historic vineyard was planted in 1978 by the Ponzi family, the original 4.2 acres of old vines are comprised of Pommard clone and the entire vineyard is set on a steep southeast slope in the Chehalem Mountains AVA, overlooking “five mountains” in the Cascade Range most widely seen from the Willamette Valley. This vineyard was an important element to the early Ponzi Reserve Pinots and has also been a Single Vineyard selection from a number of premier Oregon wineries over the years. This site is now sustainably farmed by Elk Cove Vineyards and comprises a total of 30 acres including the original old vine Pinot Noir, Dijon Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris, Pinot Blanc, Riesling, Gewurztraminer and Muscat.

At the close of harvest 2011, many winegrowers breathed a sigh of relief. Feelings of déjà vu from 2010 were evident as the picking pushed even later into the season, making it one of Oregon’s latest harvests on record. Yet, differences will mark them unique. Yields in 2011 were opposite of 2010, when production was down significantly due to poor fruit set and damage at harvest from migrating birds. This year, sunny weather brought good fruit-set and large compact clusters. The large crop had many growers thinning to one cluster per shoot. And the birds did not ‘help’ reduce yields as they did in 2010. Thus allowing normal yields compared to the dramatically reduced vintage in 2010. While the heat index shows a warmer vintage in 2011 than 2010, most notable was when the heat came. This vintage brought the ‘nice weather’ late in the season allowing us to let the fruit hang 15 days longer for fantastic flavors and better pH and acid balance. Winemaker, Adam Campbell, comments, “the late and cool vintage really highlight why we choose to grow grapes on the viticultural edge. Extremely long hang time gave us wines with concentrated ripe fruit flavors, beautiful freshness and lower alcohol. These wines are why we love Oregon!” Reminding Oregon vintners, once again, those who held on patiently will be richly rewarded in the wines.

Viticultural Data:

Vine Age: 33 years
Yield: 1.75 tons/acre
Harvest Sugars: 23 Brix

Enological Data:

pH: 3.64
Bottled: August 2012
12 Bottle Cases
Produced: 398

Reviews

90 Pts. ~ *Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar* ~ July/Aug. 2013

“Bright red. Lively cherry and black raspberry aromas are given depth by hints of saffras and black tea. Sappy and penetrating, offering bitter cherry and dark berry flavors that are given a tangy edge by bright acidity. Closes firm and long, with resonating spiciness and slow-building, fine-grained tannins.” — Josh Reynolds