

2020 CHARDONNAY *Estate*

VINTAGE FACTS 2020

A mild and dry winter in 2019-20 was followed by a dry growing season. Rain during bloom reduced the crop size by 38% on average, which is the lowest in Oregon winemaking history. Following bloom, we had a beautiful growing season, with warm and dry conditions. When we have a low-yielding vintage, the wines are very concentrated in color, tannins and body. Heat stress during the summer was moderate and pest and disease pressure was low.

The expansive size of the Willamette Valley and the fact that our vineyards are scattered throughout were a clear advantage for fruit sourcing after the wildfires this season; our sites were largely unimpacted.

It is very rare in Oregon that you get enough hang time on the vine to develop brown seeds. In mid-September, the daytime temperatures in some areas barely cracked 60 degrees, halting sugar ripeness, but continuing physiological ripeness where things like flavors and tannins develop. Much of the tannins come from the seeds and 2020 had a higher level of brown seeds, so the resulting wines have complex nutty, spicy and earthy qualities.

THE VINEYARDS

Estate Vineyard: Planted in 1983 by Founder Jim Bernau on a south facing volcanic flow, the vineyard has 67 acres of vines at 500 to 750 feet in elevation. The first Dijon clones were planted in 1993. The Nekia and Jory soils are well drained to a depth of one and a half to six feet.

Tualatin Estate Vineyard: Established in 1973, Laurelwood soil covers most of the vineyard – formed over thousands of years on layers of wind blown glacial silt called loess. High concentrations of rusted iron balls called pisolites riddle the top layer and are caused by the weathering of minerals in the soil. This unique soil profile contributes to the Pinot Noir's complex nature and rose petal aromas.

Elton: In 2006, *Wine & Spirits* listed it as one of the five key vineyards in the new Eola-Amity Hills American Viticultural Area. In 2007, Elton Vineyard was named one of Oregon's top ten vineyards by *Wine Press Northwest*. Planted in 1983, the vineyard now includes 60 acres on east-southeast slopes of the Eola Hills. The elevation rises from 250-500 feet, and the soil is Jory and Nekia.

WINEMAKING NOTES

The focus of this wine is on the combination of all of our clones in our three Estate Vineyards, the majority being Dijon clones, which are particularly suited to our cool climate. Creaminess and richness, with balanced oak, acidity and forward fruit is the goal. The grapes were picked at peak ripeness, and lightly whole cluster pressed to avoid harsh phenols. The juice was cold settled and racked to barrels where it was inoculated with selected yeast strains. Fermentation lasted approximately five weeks at 60-65° F. The barrel lees were stirred once monthly through malolactic fermentation which finished in March. Aging was sur lee until July, when racking took place via Bulldog pup, (a nitrogen pushing system).

TECHNICAL DATA

Grape Type: Chardonnay

Clones: 76, 96, 352, Draper

Appellation: Willamette Valley

Soil Type: Jory (iron rich volcanic), Nekia (shallow iron rich volcanic), Laurelwood (windblown, glacial loess) including Pisolites and Missoula Flood sediment

Harvest Date: Sept. 28 – Oct. 15, 2020

Harvest Statistics

- **Brix:** 21.7°
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 8.15 g/L
- **pH:** 3.15

Finished Wine Statistics

- **Alcohol:** 13.3%
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 7.29 g/L
- **pH:** 3.30
- **Sulfate Level:** low

Fermentation: French oak barrels

Barrel Regimen: 10 months in barrel, 25% new French oak, 75% neutral

Bottling Date: July 23, 2021

Cases Produced: 605

TASTING NOTES

White gold color shines in the glass, orange marmalade, dried apricots, lemon zest and a ginger spice nose provide beautiful and intriguing aromatics. Fresh thyme, pear flesh, pink lady and gala apples provide an abundance of flavors and texture with minerality and a touch of brioche finish that linger on the palate.

Peak Drinkability: 2022 – 2027

FOOD PAIRINGS

Enjoy with a risotto topped with Brie cheese, spaghetti carbonara and buttered scallops with roasted fingerling potatoes.

