

# 2020 PINOT NOIR *Whole Cluster*



## 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.

## WINEMAKING NOTES

The stylistic vision of this wine is to capture pure Pinot Noir fruit with beautiful depth and structure through whole cluster fermentation and carbonic maceration. Our winemaking philosophy demands attention to detail from vineyard to bottle. The vineyards for this wine are chosen to complement this unique style of wine. The whole grape clusters (including the stems) are gently conveyed into stainless steel tanks that have been filled with CO2 gas. Yeast is then added and the lid closed tightly to exclude any excess oxygen. Pressing takes place when aromatic and taste characters are ideal and tannins are still gentle. After pressing, fermentation finishes over a 7 - 10 day period in stainless steel tanks. The pH is monitored closely during malolactic fermentation until the desired balance is achieved.

## HISTORY OF WHOLE CLUSTER PINOT NOIR

Whole cluster refers to making wine with entire bunches of grapes including the stems, a style that was common until the invention of destemming machines. Years ago, Founder Jim Bernau began experimenting with Pinot Noir by gently dropping hand-picked whole clusters in a chilled stainless fermenter, pushing all the oxygen out with CO2 and sealing the vessel tight. What happened next was magical – the berries started to swell and turn pink. When they burst, they released the most aromatic, fermenting Pinot Noir. This wine is balanced, refreshing and versatile for countless food pairings.

## TECHNICAL DATA

**Grape Type:** Pinot Noir

**Clones:** 114, 115, 667, 777, Pommard and Wädenswil

**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. 22 – Oct. 18, 2020

### Harvest Statistics

- **Brix:** 23.6° – 24.5°
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 5.70 – 7.79 g/L
- **pH:** 3.36 – 3.59

### Finished Wine Statistics

- **Alcohol:** 13.5%
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 6.21 g/L
- **pH:** 3.68
- **Residual Sugar:** 6.0 g/L
- **Sulfate Level:** low

**Resveratrol:** 7 Micromoles/L

**Fermentation:** Whole Cluster  
Fermentation in stainless steel tanks

**Bottling Date:** March 2021

## TASTING NOTES

Characterized by the winemaking process that focuses on pure fruit expression, the wine opens with aromas of blackberry, cherry and raspberry accented by subtle savory spice and vanilla. Indicative of the warm and even growing season, the palate is rich, coating and leads to juicy flavors that mirror aromas with the addition of dark chocolate and mocha that flow into soft, round finish with balancing acidity.

**Peak Drinkability:** 2021 – 2024

## FOOD PAIRINGS

Our most versatile Pinot Noir for food pairing, this wine lends itself well to sweet and tangy BBQ dishes, sushi, spicy Asian and Indian dishes, wood-fired flatbreads, gourmet burgers and salmon. Try serving slightly chilled on a warm summer evening.

