

## TASTING NOTES

The 2015 Estate Pinot Noir expresses the terroir of our three vineyards - the original planting by Founder, Jim Bernau at the winery in the Salem Hills, Tualatin Estate planted by Oregon wine pioneer Bill Fuller in the foothills of the Coastal Range and Elton planted by Dick and Betty O'Brien on the east face of the Eola-Amity Hills.

This wine exemplifies the "Oregon style" even with the vintage being the warmest on record. Complex aromas of black cherry, dried herbs, floral and spice create an alluring nose. On the palate, the wine is full-bodied with a silky mouthfeel and flavors of blackberry, bergamot, anise and cedar. Exceptionally balanced with velvety tannins, lively acidity and a lingering finish.

Peak drinkability 2017-2022



## TECHNICAL DATA

**Grape Type:** Pinot Noir

**Appellation:** Willamette Valley

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

**Clones:** Dijon 667 and 777, Pommard, Wadenswil, 113, 114, 115

**Harvest Date:** Sept. 14 - Oct. 16, 2015

**Harvest Statistics**

**Brix:** 21.3° - 23.9°

**Titrate acidity:** 5.75 - 7.1 g/L

**pH:** 3.31 - 3.64

**Finished Wine Statistics**

**Alcohol:** 14.3%

**Titrate acidity:** 6.31 g/L

**pH:** 3.61

**Fermentation:** Small Bin

**Barrel Regimen:** 9 months in barrel, 23% New French Oak

**Bottling Date:** September 2016

**Cases Bottled:** 15,485



2015

WILLAMETTE VALLEY  
VINEYARDS*Estate*

WILLAMETTE VALLEY · PINOT NOIR

## VINTAGE FACTS 2015

The 2015 vintage began with warm weather conditions in the winter that continued throughout spring and summer. Yet, light scattered showers in late August and a return to normalcy in September gave a break to what was an intense growing season. The result was concentrated, balanced fruit throughout the state.

The 2015 vintage started with bud break in March, two to three weeks early depending on the site. The early trend continued with higher than normal temperatures through spring, which created exceptional conditions for bloom, flower and fruit set. As spring gave way to summer, conditions continued to be warmer than usual and consequentially grape clusters were far larger than typical. Growers had the choice to slow down ripening by leaving extra fruit on the vine for balance. As September gave way to standard weather patterns, the decision to hang extra fruit allowed it to mature more gradually and develop extraordinary flavors that harmoniously balanced against acids.

Harvest started in September and was in full swing by the second week of September, making 2015 one of the earliest harvests on record. The growing conditions from bud break through harvest paved the way for virtually pristine fruit with minimal signs of disease and no fear of pest or bird effects. Some sites did experience sunburnt grapes.

*Courtesy of the Oregon Wine Board.*

## THE VINEYARDS

**Estate Vineyard:** Planted in 1983 by Founder Jim Bernau on a south facing volcanic flow, the vineyard has 53 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 sixty 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 stylistic vision is pure Pinot Noir fruit with a soft, juicy mouthfeel, balanced oak and soft, sweet, ripe tannins. The methodology includes attention to detail from vineyard to bottle. Picked at peak ripeness, the fruit was gently destemmed, with approximately 90% of the berries remaining intact for intra-berry fermentation, which adds lively fruit forward characteristics. Prior to fermentation, the must underwent a five day pre-fermentation using a non-saccharomyces cerevisiae yeast strain which provides improved complexity, color and mouthfeel. On the fifth day, the must was inoculated with indigenous yeast. After 8-12 days of fermentation in small fermenters, punched down by hand, the must was pressed out with about 1% residual sugar and allowed to settle in the tank overnight. The new wine was barreled with light, fluffy lees where it finished primary fermentation and underwent malolactic fermentation.

## FOOD &amp; SERVING SUGGESTIONS

This wine will pair beautifully with classic Pinot Noir dishes including Oregon lamb, duck, pork, grilled salmon and aged cheeses.

[www.WillametteValleyVineyards.com](http://www.WillametteValleyVineyards.com)

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Jim Bernau, Founder/Winegrower