

# 2017 PINOT NOIR *Founders' Reserve*

## VINTAGE FACTS 2017

After a few dry winters, the 2016-17 winter provided ample rain and snowpack statewide. The winter gave way to a relatively cool and wet spring compared to the last few years. As a result, bud break in Oregon started closer to normal in mid-April. The spring warmed up with record heat in late May that initiated flowering in most areas of the state. However, a cool down in early June slowed flowering through the second and third week of the month then was followed by a few days of record high temperatures. Growers statewide noted that flowering was very complete and produced a very good fruit set. Many also indicated that the warm conditions in 2016 set the stage for increased fruitfulness, producing more clusters per vine and larger clusters.

July ramped up the heat moving the vintage rapidly to véraison. However, August saw multiple one day records for maximum daytime temperatures with heat stress events early and late in the month. The result was that August 2017 was the warmest August on record in the state and the majority of the western US. Growers noted that the heat stress did not produce much sunburn but may have delayed ripening in some varieties. There was no impact of smoke from forest fires on Willamette Valley producers, unlike Southern Oregon and the Columbia Gorge AVAs, except that the possible disadvantages of the hazy weather during early stages of ripening reduced sunlight intensity and could have caused reduced photosynthesis.

A warm early September accelerated fruit development, but was slowed by a cool down mid-month. Feeling that the harvest was going to be fast and furious, growers breathed a sigh of relief with the cooler conditions and proceeded to have a slow and steady harvest. From grower reports, 2017 ended with near average to slightly higher than average sugar and acid levels with many touting beautiful flavors and well-balanced fruit.

*Courtesy of the Oregon Wine Board.*

## WINEMAKING NOTES

The stylistic vision is pure Pinot Noir fruit with a 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 seven-day, pre-fermentation cold soak which provides complexity, color and mouthfeel. On the seventh day, the must was inoculated with commercial yeast. After 8-12 days of fermentation in small fermenters, punched down by hand, the must was pressed out and allowed to settle in the tank overnight. The new wine was barreled with light, fluffy lees where it underwent malolactic fermentation.

## TECHNICAL DATA

**Grape Type:** Pinot Noir

**Clones:** 113, 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:** October 3 – 25, 2017

### Harvest Statistics

- **Brix:** 22.1° – 23.0°
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 5.98 – 6.03 g/L
- **pH:** 3.35 – 3.56

### Finished Wine Statistics

- **Alcohol:** 13.5%
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 5.07 g/L
- **pH:** 3.71
- **Sulfate Level:** low

**Fermentation:** Small bins

**Barrel Regimen:** 9 months in barrel,  
25% new French oak

**Bottling Date:** June 2018

## TASTING NOTES

Ruby in color, the wine features a bright nose of black and red cherry, savory dried herbs and earth. An inviting palate with fruit-forward flavors of cranberry and raspberry are accented by cocoa powder and toasted oak over a medium-bodied frame with integrated tannins and balanced acidity.

**Peak Drinkability:** 2019 – 2024

## FOOD PAIRINGS

Enjoy with classic pairings like salmon, grilled lamb, roasted pork and mushroom risotto.

