

2017 PINOT NOIR *Elton*

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.

THE VINEYARD

Elton: In 2006, *Wine & Spirits* listed it as one of the five key vineyards in the 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 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 70% 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 cold soak providing improved complexity, color and mouthfeel. On the fifth day, the must was inoculated with selected 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: 114, 115, 777, Dijon, Pommard and Wädenswil

Appellation: Eola-Amity Hills

Soil Type: Jory (iron rich volcanic), Nekia (shallow iron rich volcanic)

Harvest Date: October 1 – 10, 2017

Harvest Statistics

- **Brix:** 24.6°
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 6.45 g/L
- **pH:** 3.27

Finished Wine Statistics

- **Alcohol:** 14.1%
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 5.74 g/L
- **pH:** 3.47
- **Sulfate Level:** low

Fermentation: Small bins

Barrel Regimen: 16 months in barrel, 29% new French oak

Bottling Date: March 15, 2019

Cases Produced: 57

TASTING NOTES

Ruby in color, the bouquet features notes of red and black fruits, minerality, herbs and earth. On the palate, black cherry, currant, forest floor and roasted hazelnuts flow into a silky texture with seamless tannins creating an elegant sip.

Peak Drinkability: 2020 – 2028

FOOD PAIRINGS

Lamb chops with balsamic reduction, herb-roasted pork tenderloin, grilled steelhead, duck breast and stuffed mushrooms.

