

# 2018 PINOT NOIR *Bernau Block*

## VINTAGE FACTS 2018

While it was a warmer than average vintage, temperatures stayed in the low to mid 90s with few heat spikes, making for a balanced year with less widespread heat stress like in years' prior, especially 2017. Low rainfall during late September and into October allowed winemakers to easily manage harvest, picking grapes when they wanted to, instead of dodging rain or having to pull fruit early. When moderately warm days occur along with cool nights, vines can rest in the evening and concentrate efforts on developing more fruit complexity and flavors. Ideal conditions like this occurred throughout Oregon in 2018.

Late bud break was due to a slightly wet and cooler April in 2018. Bloom in verasion caught up quickly and was close to average across the state. While there was low bird pressure, there were enormous amounts of yellow jackets, which points to a mild winter with temperatures not cold enough to keep the insect populations down.

Harvest was slow and steady in Oregon resulting in truly dialed in fruit composition with sugar levels, acidity, and pH all close to average.

Bree Stock MW, Oregon Wine Board Education Manager said: "The 2018 vintage in the Willamette Valley and Oregon overall is looking to make some exceptional wines. Not exactly a return to normal, as the spring and summer were some of the warmest and driest on record, but there were no real heat spikes and the season was longer due to the cool autumn weather. That allowed grapes to hang and develop complex flavors on the vine while retaining fresh acidity."

*Courtesy of the Oregon Wine Board.*

## THE VINEYARD

**Estate, Bernau Block:** Planted in 1983 by Founder Jim Bernau on a south facing volcanic flow, the vineyard has 15 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.

## 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 intraberry 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 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 complete malolactic fermentation.

## TECHNICAL DATA

**Grape Type:** Pinot Noir

**Clones:** 667, 777

**Appellation:** Willamette Valley

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

**Harvest Date:** October 2 – 4, 2018

**Harvest Statistics**

- **Brix:** 23.9°
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 8.8 g/L
- **pH:** 3.24

**Finished Wine Statistics**

- **Alcohol:** 14.1%
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 6.92 g/L
- **pH:** 3.21
- **Sulfate Level:** low

**Fermentation:** Small bins

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

**Bottling Date:** February 28, 2020

## TASTING NOTES

Sourced exclusively from 15 acres of Pinot Noir from the first plantings at the Estate Vineyard, Founder Jim Bernau planted these vines using a Christmas tree planter pulled behind his 33 horsepower tractor. He grafted the French clones 667 and 777 on a portion of the vines when they became available.

The 2018 vintage resulted in perfectly ripe fruit with intense color and opulent flavors. Deep garnet colored in the glass, the wine opens with a complex nose of bramble fruit, plum, dried herbs and minerality notes. Showcasing concentration and elegance, the palate is packed with flavors of red and black fruit framed by cedar and earth. The well-structured, polished tannins and balancing acidity suggest this wine will further reward those with patience.

**Peak Drinkability:** 2021 – 2030

## FOOD PAIRINGS

The Bernau Block is not just for casual sipping, this wine can stand up to rich gastronomic dishes. Enjoy with grilled Oregon lamb chops, cedar plank salmon, filet mignon, mushroom risotto, dishes featuring native Oregon truffles and charcuterie.

