

# 2018 PINOT NOIR *Founders' Reserve*

## 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.*

## 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.

## HISTORY OF FOUNDERS' RESERVE PINOT NOIR

Willamette Valley Vineyards was established in 1983 when Oregon native Jim Bernau planted Pinot Noir in an overgrown pioneer plum orchard in the Salem Hills, watering his vines by hand using 17 lengths of 75' garden hose. He was supported by dedicated group of wine enthusiasts committed to producing the highest quality Pinot Noirs while being good stewards of the land. As a tribute to these individuals, we have created this special blend of Pinot Noir sourced exclusively from the Willamette Valley.

## 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 2 – 10, 2018

### Harvest Statistics

- **Brix:** 23.8°
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 6.21 g/L
- **pH:** 3.25

### Finished Wine Statistics

- **Alcohol:** 14.0%
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 6.28 g/L
- **pH:** 3.45
- **Sulfate Level:** low

**Fermentation:** Small bins

**Barrel Regimen:** 9 months in barrel, 30% new French oak

**Bottling Date:** July 2019

## TASTING NOTES

Ruby in color, the wine features a nose of cranberry, black cherry, caramel, savory herbs and earth. An inviting palate with juicy flavors of raspberry and strawberry fruit leather are accented by sweet baking spice and toasted oak over a mediobodied frame with integrated tannins and balanced acidity.

**Peak Drinkability:** 2020 – 2025

## FOOD PAIRINGS

Enjoy with classic pairings like cedar plank salmon, grilled lamb, roasted pork, mushroom risotto and dishes topped with truffles.

