

2019 PINOT NOIR *Founders' Reserve*

VINTAGE FACTS 2019

A relatively mild, early winter in 2018 was followed by a cold and wet second half of winter in 2019 and then a wet but warm spring. The growing season saw a few mild frosts during late April, but started off warmer than average, moderating through mid-vintage with fewer-than-average heat spikes. The vintage will be remembered for the early rains in September and rapid cool down into October which challenged harvesting decisions. Degree-day totals for 2019 ended up similar to 2012 and 2018, marked by the lowest heat accumulation experienced in September and October since 2007. Phenological timing and interval lengths were similar to observations in 2018 averaging April 16th for bud break, June 8th for bloom, August 14th for véraison and September 27th for harvest. The cool vintage came largely from substantially lower maximum temperatures while minimum temperatures were near-average to slightly above-average.

Courtesy of Gregory V. Jones, Linfield College Evenstad Center for Wine Education.

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: Sept. 29 – Oct. 17, 2019

Harvest Statistics

- **Brix:** 23.8°
- **Titratable Acidity:** 6.50 g/L
- **pH:** 3.23

Finished Wine Statistics

- **Alcohol:** 13.5%
- **Titratable Acidity:** 6.31 g/L
- **pH:** 3.40
- **Sulfate Level:** low

Fermentation: Small bins

Barrel Regimen: 9 months in barrel, 25% new French oak, 75% neutral

Bottling Date: June 2020

TASTING NOTES

Deep garnet in color, the wine features aromas of black cherry, blackberry, plum and holiday spices. An inviting, juicy palate with fruit-forward flavors are accented by dark chocolate and toasted oak over a medium-bodied frame with integrated tannins and balanced acidity.

Peak Drinkability: 2021 – 2026

FOOD PAIRINGS

Enjoy with food pairings including salmon, grilled lamb, roasted pork, chicken marsala, cassoulet or braised pork pappardelle pasta.

