

# 2020 PINOT NOIR *Estate*

## VINTAGE FACTS 2020

A mild and dry winter in 2019-20 was followed by a dry growing season. Rain during bloom reduced the crop size by 38% on average, which is the lowest in Oregon winemaking history. Following bloom, we had a beautiful growing season, with warm and dry conditions. When we have a low-yielding vintage, the wines are very concentrated in color, tannins and body. Heat stress during the summer was moderate and pest and disease pressure was low.

The expansive size of the Willamette Valley and the fact that our vineyards are scattered throughout were a clear advantage for fruit sourcing after the wildfires this season; our sites were largely unimpacted.

It is very rare in Oregon that you get enough hang time on the vine to develop brown seeds. In mid-September, the daytime temperatures in some areas barely cracked 60 degrees, halting sugar ripeness, but continuing physiological ripeness where things like flavors and tannins develop. Much of the tannins come from the seeds and 2020 had a higher level of brown seeds, so the resulting wines have complex nutty, spicy and earthy qualities.

## THE VINEYARDS

**Estate Vineyard:** Planted in 1983 by Founder Jim Bernau on a south facing volcanic flow, the vineyard has 67 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.

**Tualatin Estate Vineyard:** Established in 1973, Laurelwood soil covers most of the vineyard – formed over thousands of years on layers of wind-blown glacial silt called loess. High concentrations of rusted iron balls called pisolites riddle the top layer and are caused by the weathering of minerals in the soil. This unique soil profile contributes to the Pinot Noir's complex nature and rose petal aromas.

**Elton:** In 2006, *Wine & Spirits* listed it as one of the five key vineyards in the new 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 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 intraberry 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:** Sept. 10 – Oct. 19, 2020

### Harvest Statistics

- **Brix:** 23.4°
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 6.12 – 7.30 g/L
- **pH:** 3.36

### Finished Wine Statistics

- **Alcohol:** 13.8%
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 6.45 g/L
- **pH:** 3.57
- **Sulfate Level:** low

**Fermentation:** Small bins

**Barrel Regimen:** 10 months in barrel, 10% new French oak, 90% neutral

**Bottling Date:** August 2021

## TASTING NOTES

The Estate Pinot Noir expresses the terroir of estate vineyards – the original planting by Founder, Jim Bernau at the winery in the Salem Hills, Tualatin Estate planted by Oregon wine pioneer Bill Fuller in the foothills of the Coastal Range and Elton planted by Dick and Betty O'Brien on the east face of the Eola-Amity Hills.

This wine exemplifies the classic "Willamette Valley style" with aromas of red fruits including cherry, raspberry and cranberry accented by notes of florals and baking spice that create an elegant bouquet. On the palate, the wine is round and full-bodied with a silky mouthfeel and flavors of dark fruit, earth, game and minerality. Exceptionally balanced with seamlessly integrated tannins, balancing acidity and a lingering finish.

**Peak Drinkability:** 2021 – 2029

## FOOD PAIRINGS

This wine will pair beautifully with traditional Pinot Noir dishes including Oregon lamb lollipops, duck breast with fruit compote, herb-crusted pork tenderloin, cedar plank grilled salmon, mushroom risottos and aged cheeses.

