

2023 DIJON CLONE *Pinot Noir*

VINTAGE FACTS 2023

2023 in the Willamette Valley began with a very cold, dry winter followed by a short, wet spring. The cooler weather led to a late bud break around April 27th through May 1st, two to three weeks behind average. It quickly warmed up and accelerated the time between bud break and bloom. Similar to the 2011 vintage, bud break was short, with flowering happening in a single week. A hailstorm during the flowering period led to lower yields for the 2023 vintage. Lower yielding vintages tend to produce wines that are very concentrated in color, tannins and body.

The summer was ideal with temperatures staying around 80 degrees. A heatwave from August 13th - 16th reached temperatures over 100 degrees in certain areas and quickly broke. The berries on the vine were at the tail end of veraison during the heatwave and were able to handle most of the heat stress. It caused an increase in sugar levels in September, just in time for harvest.

With a record yield from our estate vineyards in 2022, the 2023 harvest reflected the typical vineyard cycle of a lower yield after a high yield. Picking began around the first week of September and finished in late October. Temperatures stayed ideal until the last week of September when rain arrived. Growers either worked through the rain to finish their harvest or paused until it passed the following week. Intermittent rain followed throughout the rest of the harvest. Willamette Valley Vineyards brought in 90 percent of its grapes by this period. Although it was a challenging vintage with lower yields, winemakers are excited about how this unique vintage will display.

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 a whole berry component 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 commercial yeast. After 8-12 days of fermentation cap management by a combination of pulsed air and pump overs, the must was pressed out and allowed to settle in the tank overnight. The wine then underwent malolactic fermentation to impart a softer mouthfeel.

HISTORY OF DIJON CLONE PINOT NOIR

Founder Jim Bernau traveled with the Oregon Governor's Delegation to Burgundy in the 1980s to seek out French clones to improve our state's wine quality. These vines were quarantined at Oregon State University before being propagated for use in Oregon vineyards. Planting these naturally-derived Dijon Clones from France in the Willamette Valley was one of the greatest tipping points in Oregon wine quality.

TECHNICAL DATA

Grape Type: Pinot Noir

Clones: 115, 667, 777, 943

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. 22 – Oct. 7, 2023

Harvest Statistics

- **Brix:** 23.0°
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 5.72 g/L
- **pH:** 3.61

Finished Wine Statistics

- **Alcohol:** 13.2%
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 5.50 g/L
- **pH:** 3.50
- **Sulfate Level:** low

Fermentation: Small bins, stainless steel tanks

Bottling Date: September 2024

TASTING NOTES

A bright ruby hue typifies this classically styled Willamette Valley Pinot Noir. Savory and fruit aromas of potpourri, ripe cranberries, white pepper and baking spices wake up the nose. Dried herbs, red cherry and raisins flavor the palate. Fresh acidity and low tannins meld seamlessly for a smooth finish.

Peak Drinkability: 2024 – 2030

FOOD PAIRINGS

The wine pairs best with savory dishes like beef bourguignon, grilled entrées like pork loin and cedar-plank salmon, charcuterie and aged cheeses.

