

2023 PINOT NOIR *Estate*

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, which was 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.

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, the vineyard is covered with Laurelwood soil that 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.

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.

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 a whole berry component 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.

TECHNICAL DATA

Grape Type: Pinot Noir

Clones: 113, 114, 115, 667, 777 and Pommard

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. 15 – Oct. 9, 2023

Harvest Statistics

- **Brix:** 23.2° – 24.1°
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 5.998 – 7.625 g/L

• **pH:** 3.53

Finished Wine Statistics

- **Alcohol:** 13.9%
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 5.86 g/L
- **pH:** 3.66
- **Sulfate Level:** low

Fermentation: Small bins

Barrel Regimen: 11 months in barrel, 18% new French oak, 82% neutral

Bottling Date: November 2024

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.

Bright ruby in the glass, the wine exemplifies the classic "Willamette Valley style" with savory and fruit-forward aromas of potpourri, sage, red currant and raspberry. The wine is medium-bodied on the palate and offers flavors of forest floor, licorice, orange peel and red cherry, concluding with fresh acidity and integrated tannins.

Peak Drinkability: 2025 – 2032

FOOD PAIRINGS

This wine will pair beautifully with traditional Pinot Noir dishes, including Oregon lamb, duck breast with fruit compote, chicken sausage with fennel and apples, cedar plank grilled salmon and aged cheeses.

