

2008 Pinot Noir 258 cases

Tasting Notes

With a foundation based on the old vines from Celilo and incorporating a newer planting at an adjacent vineyard on Underwood Mountain, this 100% Pinot Noir shows rich ruby red color and opulent nose starting with strawberry and cranberry aromas, mingling with fresh cracked black pepper and rose petals. The palate flows through red raspberry, pie cherry and subtle hints of nutmeg. The overall impression of juicy, red fruit is complemented by bright acidity. The wine is beautiful, with enough acid and silky tannins to really shine with 3-5 years bottle age. Here is a wine that proves great Pinot Noir can be grown in Washington.



Harvest Notes

Vineyards: Celilo 55% and Underwood Mountain 45%
Appellation: Columbia Gorge
Year Planted: Celilo: 1972 Underwood Mountain: 2001
Harvest Dates: late October
Varietals: 100% Pinot Noir

Vineyard

We became acquainted with Rick Ensminger, the vineyard manager for Celilo, in 1997. We were well aware of the reputation for both Chardonnay and Gewurztraminer produced from this vineyard and were pleasantly surprised to discover the two acre block of Pinot Noir planted in 1972. Since this discovery, we have given special attention to lower yields and canopy management on this block to create a distinctive and concentrated Pinot Noir. The vineyard sits directly on the crest of the Cascade Mountains on a bluff 1,000' in elevation on Underwood Mountain, overlooking the Columbia River Gorge. This is unique environment where marine, desert and alpine climates intersect to provide weather patterns perfect for distinctive Pinot Noir. Rows are oriented north south and the vines are trained to a Scott-Henry trellis. Clusters are thinned to one per shoot with all shoulders cut off to maintain yields of less than 2 tons per acre. Soils are volcanic loam and are dry farmed.

Underwood Mountain Vineyard is tucked into a sheltered pocket on the south east side of the Underwood Mountain volcano. Protected from the marine rains, yet completely alpine in character, this vineyard produces wines with focused aromas and flavors, and bracing acidity. Rows are oriented North-South and vines are trained vertical shoot positioning. Clusters are thinned to one per shoot with all shoulders cut off to maintain yields of less than 2 tons per acre. Soils are volcanic loam and are dry farmed.

Vinification

The fruit is hand harvested and transported to the winery in the early morning. The fruit is de-stemmed into fermenters with 10-30% whole clusters added. Cold soaked for 2-5 days followed by inoculated fermentation in open top fermenters. Pressed at dryness and barreled on heavy lees in French oak barrels (20% new). Bottled in 11 months.