

2022 DIJON CLONE *Chardonnay*

VINTAGE FACTS 2022

Following a relatively warm winter, the spring of 2022 will be remembered for frost impacts and prolonged cool and wet conditions into mid-June. In Oregon, the winter was the eighth warmest on record. The vines were slow to recover but experienced nearly ideal conditions during bloom, leading to a much larger than anticipated fruit set. The rest of the summer provided ample warmth, with certain areas experiencing a record-breaking stretch of eight days over 95 degrees in late July, but very little heat stress.

The 2022 growing season in the Pacific Northwest from April through October was a whiplash from a cool and wet spring to one of the driest and warmest ripening periods on record. When bloom finally arrived, it did so during a moderate heat spike but under mostly clear skies, resulting in an excellent fruit set and ultimately huge clusters. As a result, fruit thinning was very important. Our lack of growth during the cool April delayed ripening and contributed to a late harvest period.

Harvest occurred in glorious conditions. A run of days with temperatures above 80 degrees in early October was welcome. Thankfully, the clear weather held and allowed the grapes to improve in flavor and quality. Willamette Valley Vineyards' harvest concluded on October 31st. The Pinot Noir yields were especially fruitful with great potential. It was the largest harvest to date for Willamette Valley Vineyards with over 2,000 tons harvested off our estate vineyards.

Courtesy of Gregory V. Jones, CEO, Abacela Vineyards and Winery

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.

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 of this wine is classic Oregon. Focus is placed on elegance, richness and creaminess in mouthfeel, with a balance of oak, fruit and bright acidity. A great wine to pair with food or enjoy by itself. The grapes were picked at peak ripeness and lightly whole cluster pressed to avoid harsh phenolics. The juice was cold settled for 24 hours and racked off of heavy lees before inoculation. Fermentation took place in neutral French oak barrels as well as in stainless steel tanks and was fermented at approximately 55°F for 3-4 weeks. A portion of the barrels were then inoculated for malolactic fermentation and stirred once monthly until malolactic fermentation was completed in April. Aging was surlee until racking prior to filtration and bottling.

TECHNICAL DATA

Grape Type: Chardonnay

Clones: 76, 96

Appellation: Willamette Valley

Soil Type: Jory (iron rich volcanic), Nekia (shallow iron rich volcanic)

Harvest Date: October 12 – 20, 2022

Harvest Statistics

- **Brix:** 21.8°
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 6.62 g/L
- **pH:** 3.30

Finished Wine Statistics

- **Alcohol:** 12.9%
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 6.027 g/L
- **pH:** 3.39
- **Sulfate Level:** low

Fermentation: French oak barrels and stainless steel tanks

Barrel Regimen: 10 months in barrel, 58% neutral French oak, 42% stainless steel tanks

Bottling Date: May 2023

TASTING NOTES

Light gold in color, the wine is fruit-driven with notes of citrus, fresh pineapple and subtle white flowers rounding out the nose. Lemon peel, yellow kiwi fruit, cantaloupe and light oak flavors emerge on the medium-bodied palate. Vibrant acidity leaves the wine refreshing and ideal for food pairing.

Peak Drinkability: 2023 – 2029

FOOD PAIRINGS

This wine pairs well with roasted chicken tacos, sweet corn bread pudding, lobster bisque, scallops with white wine sauce and cheeses such as havarti and asiago.

