

2022 PINOT NOIR *Whole Cluster*



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 a great fruit set and ultimately very large clusters. As a result, fruit thinning was very important. The lack of growth that we had during the cool April delayed ripening and 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 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.

WINEMAKING NOTES

The stylistic vision of this wine is to capture pure Pinot Noir fruit with beautiful depth and structure through whole cluster fermentation and carbonic maceration. Our winemaking philosophy demands attention to detail from vineyard to bottle. The vineyards for this wine are chosen to complement the unique style of wine. The whole grape clusters (including the stems) are gently conveyed into stainless steel tanks that have been filled with CO₂ gas. Yeast is then added and the lid closed tightly to exclude excess oxygen. Pressing takes place when aromatic and taste characters are ideal and tannins are still gentle. After pressing, fermentation finishes over a 7–10 day period in stainless steel tanks. The pH is monitored closely during malolactic fermentation until the desired balance is achieved.

HISTORY OF WHOLE CLUSTER PINOT NOIR

Whole cluster refers to making wine with entire bunches of grapes including the stems, a style that was common until the invention of destemming machines. Years ago, Founder and CEO Jim Bernau began experimenting with Pinot Noir by gently dropping hand-picked whole clusters in a chilled stainless fermenter, pushing all the oxygen out with CO₂ and sealing the vessel tight. What happened next was magical – the berries started to swell and turn pink. When they burst, they released the most aromatic, fermenting Pinot Noir. This wine is balanced, refreshing and versatile for countless food pairings.

TECHNICAL DATA

Grape Type: Pinot Noir

Clones: 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: October 3 – 18, 2022

Harvest Statistics

- **Brix:** 22.9° – 23.6°
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 7.73 – 8.14 g/L
- **pH:** 3.41 – 3.53

Finished Wine Statistics

- **Alcohol:** 13.2%
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 5.831 g/L
- **pH:** 3.61
- **Residual Sugar:** 8.5 g/L
- **Sulfate Level:** low

Resveratrol: 16.2 Micromoles/L

Fermentation: Whole Cluster Fermentation in stainless steel tanks

Bottling Date: April 27, 2023

TASTING NOTES

This Pinot Noir shows rich colors of dark garnet and currant. Plentiful aromas of cherry cola, black tea and wild blueberry give ample depth and character to the wine. A pleasant array of fruit flavors and barrel notes includes marionberry, candied cherry and hints of cedar and sweet tobacco. The wine tickles the palate with lingering tannins and a generous round mouthfeel.

Peak Drinkability: 2023 – 2027

FOOD PAIRINGS

Our most versatile Pinot Noir for food pairings, this wine lends itself to savory, spicy and zesty dishes. Enjoy with Yucatán-style barbecued pork, wood-fired pizzas, spicy Asian and Indian dishes, gourmet burgers and salmon.

