

2022 PINOT NOIR *Elton*

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 led 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 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 VINEYARD

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 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 to add lively fruit forward characteristics. Prior to fermentation, the must underwent a five day pre-fermentation cold soak which provides improved complexity, color and mouthfeel. On the fifth 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 and underwent malolactic fermentation.

TECHNICAL DATA

Grape Type: Pinot Noir

Clones: 115, 667, 777, Pommard

Appellation: Eola-Amity Hills

Soil Type: Jory (iron rich volcanic)

Harvest Date: October 19 – 23, 2022

Harvest Statistics

- **Brix:** 23.9°
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 5.099 g/L
- **pH:** 3.46

Finished Wine Statistics

- **Alcohol:** 13.8%
- **Titrateable Acidity:** 5.76 g/L
- **pH:** 3.46
- **Sulfate Level:** low
- Fermentation:** Small bins
- Barrel Regimen:** 20 months in barrel, 20% new French oak
- Bottling Date:** Septmeber 27 – 28, 2024

TASTING NOTES

Bright ruby in the glass with classic fruit-forward aromas of black cherry, raspberry, cinnamon and red licorice. The wine imparts flavors of dried herbs, black tea, cranberry and black olive. Fresh tannins, a medium body and balanced acidity lead to a long, lingering finish.

Peak Drinkability: 2024 – 2032

FOOD PAIRINGS

Pair with grilled meats and savory dishes, including wine-braised beef with mushrooms, herb-roasted pork tenderloin, grilled steelhead and seasonal vegetables.

