



Background—We first used the name “Elizabeth’s Reserve” in 1986 to designate the blend of our best barrels of Pinot noir. For a dozen intervening vintages, it was used for a single vineyard wine, but since 2000, “Elizabeth’s Reserve” has again been a “best of winery” reserve – the best barrels from our best lots. This approach can be traced to the coming of age of our estate vineyards. With over 170 acres in vines, now almost all our Pinot noir fruit comes from our eight estate vineyards located on south-facing slopes of the Chehalem Mountains. With many wonderful lots, representing different soil types, clones, site climates, fermenter sizes, and barrel characteristics, we give our winemaker Dave Paige a free hand in devising how to pull together the most delicious, reserve-level wine, one that truly reflects the vintage and character of Yamhill County Pinot noir.

Growing Season—By Spring (and in spite a typical rainy Oregon winter) we suspected that 2003 would be an early vintage. The first clear indicators were that bud-break came before Easter and flowering took place in mid-June. There was such a large crop that it took two passes of thinning to get the level down low enough to insure flavor intensity. A very warm August and September meant that all the grapes seemed to ripen at once. The grapes for this wine were picked in the last two weeks of September and the first week of October.

Vineyards—The five vineyards contributing to this bottling of Elizabeth’s Reserve are found on two different soil types. As is typical of a warm/early vintage, some of our best lots this year came from our higher-elevation sites, which have basaltic origin clay-loam soils: Quarter Mile Lane Vineyard (35%) and Bryan Creek Vineyard (20%) both on the Chehalem Mountains and the one non-estate site, Goldschmidt Vineyard (13%), in the Dundee Hills. All three of these locations yield grapes with intense red fruit character, though that character varies from cherry through raspberry to plum. The other pieces, from Calkins Lane Vineyard (17%) and Ribbon Springs Vineyard (15%), are also in the Chehalem Mountains, but lie are on lower elevation, sedimentary silt-loams which produce wines with great structure and a certain black fruit quality.

Winemaking—The production methodology of this Elizabeth’s Reserve included gentle destemming, a four to six day cold soak for greater flavor and color extraction, and commercial yeast fermentation in temperature-controlled, open-top fermenters that were punched down two to three times per day. The wines underwent a secondary, malolactic fermentation in small, medium-toast French oak barrels (36% new) and were aged in barrel for 10½ months. Following a light egg white fining for some of the lots, the wine was blended, and then bottled on August 27, 2004.

The Wine—This 2003 Elizabeth’s Reserve offers a lovely bouquet of red fruits, wild and black cherries, and spices. The luscious mouth-feel layers focused raspberry and cherry fruits, complemented by balanced oak and a long, complex finish. While many will enjoy this wine when young, the wine’s elegant structure and round, soft tannins will allow it to develop for at least a decade, given proper storage conditions. It will pair beautifully with the Pinot noir classics – lamb, duck, grilled salmon, and aged cheeses.

The Label—Drawn by Ginny Adelsheim, the label features the Adelsheims' only child, Elizabeth. It was the first in a series of daughters' portraits used on our upper-tier wines. Elizabeth has been a part of Adelsheim Vineyard since her birth in 1981. She began graduate studies in Philosophy at the University of Paris (Sorbonne) in the fall of 2004.

Production—We produced 8400 bottles (750ml), which are packaged in six-bottle cases.