



2006 WILLAMETTE VALLEY ROSÉ

BACKGROUND When our co-owners Jack and Lynn Locker broached the subject of producing a dry rosé from Pinot noir back in the spring of 2005, we jumped at the chance to showcase our wine sensibility in a new tint. While we have ended up with small lots of “saignée” (a portion of juice bleed off from a fermenter of Pinot noir immediately after being filled with destemmed grapes), we never had set out to create a rosé from scratch. True to Adelsheim form, we jumped into the intellectual challenge of creating a wine that was neither white (crisp, clean and refreshing) nor red (round, full, and savory) – we wanted a wine that had elements of both but was its own wine, and was recognizably “Oregon.” Our first vintage was a lovely first step. This 2006, a giant leap forward.

GROWING SEASON Although storms carrying a lot of rain swept through Oregon in mid-January – slowing up pruning work – by the time spring rolled around, the 2006 growing season had caught up to what we assume to be “normal” timing in this day and age. Bud break occurred in the third week of March, and bloom about the second week of June. Perfect bloom weather resulted in too many clusters, each with too many berries. Thus, we had to spend a significant amount of time in “green harvest” passes to pare back the crop to what our climate could actually ripen. Harvest was accomplished in near perfect weather, warm enough that everything ripened smoothly, yet not all at once, with cool mornings for picking, and very little rain. The first Pinot noir grapes were picked September 14, and everything was in the door at the winery by the second week of October.

VINEYARDS Ten different vineyards provided the fruit for the cuvée that makes up this wine, ranging through all the elevations of our vineyards, both of our soil types (volcanic and sedimentary), and a variety of clones and vine-age.

WINEMAKING Winemaker Dave Paige obtained the juice for this Rosé through a mix of “saignée” (which gives very light-colored juice) and – with different batches – removing juice as much as 24 hours later to gain richer flavors and more color. As with our white wines, the juice underwent a cool fermentation to preserve the high-toned esters, mostly in stainless steel, but with 20% placed in neutral (very old) small French oak barrels for textural enhancement. With the richness that came from the 2006 growing conditions, he allowed only 25% of the wine to undergo malolactic fermentation. In the final blending, he also added a half barrel of red Pinot noir (which makes up about 2% of the final wine). It was bottled in late April of 2007.

THE WINE This 2006 Rosé is on the rich (i.e. “red wine”) side of the pink wine continuum, with lovely pie cherry, strawberry and rhubarb fruits at the fore, while still finishing clean and crisp. Though perfect as a summer “cocktail”, it is serious enough to pair wonderfully with all manner of that season’s meals, from bouillabaisse and grilled shrimp, to goat cheese, ham and poultry entrees. And when strawberry season rolls around...look out!

THE LABEL This wine belongs to our series of relatively rare wines – officially (and lovingly) designated as “Wacky”, since they are not what one expects from a Willamette Valley winery. We use the same Ginny Adelsheim drawing for all of them, a “portrait” of our winery as seen from a hill in our Calkins Lane estate vineyard.

PRODUCTION We produced 604 cases of this 2006 Willamette Valley Rosé.

