



2004 WILLAMETTE VALLEY PINOT NOIR

BACKGROUND The intent we bring to producing and blending the Willamette Valley Pinot noir is to unite the elements – especially the fresh fruit flavors – that typify Pinot noir in this region, albeit as tempered by the vagaries of the vintage. By blending the diverse flavors and textures of multiple vineyards, Winemaker Dave Paige produces a richly supple and focused Pinot noir.

GROWING SEASON It was an interesting year! Warm weather in February jump-started the vines, causing bud break to occur on March 29th, much earlier than usual. A combination of factors – a touch of frost, a tiny critter that caused “short shoot syndrome”, and bad weather at bloom – took care of crop thinning for the year with no human intervention necessary. June, July, and much of August were very hot, but our heaviest August rain storm in a couple decades brought that to an end. Then, a nice stretch of dry weather, beginning in mid-September, allowed flavors to mature coolly and fully just before harvest.

VINEYARDS Our 2004 Willamette Valley Pinot noir is blended from several vineyards in the northern part of Oregon’s Willamette Valley. The final blend consisted of 80% estate-grown fruit, from vineyards located on the south side of the Chehalem Mountains. The portion of grapes grown on sedimentary soils add a certain black fruit character in the bottle, but the red fruit flavors contributed by the basaltic-origin sites are predominant in the finished wine.

WINEMAKING We harvest by hand and gently de-stem into temperature-controlled, open-top fermenters. These are punched down once per day during a 4-6 day cold soak, then two or three times per day once the fermentation begins. Decisions about fermentation temperatures and the point of pressing are made with a view to maximizing extraction of fruit flavors while avoiding extraction of bitter tannins. Once in barrel (all French oak, 25% new) the wine underwent malolactic fermentation and 10 months of aging before the blend was assembled. As always, throughout the process methods were aimed at increasing complexity while preserving the intensity of fruit. Bottling took place in late August, 2005.

THE WINE Red and black cherry fruits are the brightly dominant characteristics, both in the nose and on the palate. Wild cherry and raspberry also stand out and a hint of spice brings a light gingerbread note. The mouthfeel might best be described as liquid silk. Pairing suggestions include ahi, salmon, poultry (particularly duck!), veal, pork and hearty vegetarian entrees.

THE LABEL For the first time in its 23-year history, the label art for this wine has been given a “facelift.” Over time, the label has become iconic, so care was taken to keep the label’s identifiability while modernizing its look and feel. We’ve kept the lady, loved by so many, but have removed the framing and brought the typography into line with the rest of our labels. Ginny Adelsheim’s original label portrait features Diana Lett, who along with her husband David founded The Eyrie Vineyards, the first winery to produce Pinot noir in the Willamette Valley. In addition to paying tribute to the Letts’ pioneering role in the history of the Oregon wine industry, this iconic label celebrates our 35-year friendship with the Letts. In the background is the view from the original Adelsheim winery on the Chehalem Mountains.

THE QUANTITY We produced 7829 cases of 12x750ml bottles, 371 cases 12x375ml bottles and 31 magnums (1.5L) of our 2004 Willamette Valley Pinot noir.

