

2007 Pinot Noir Estate Cuvée

Varietal: 100% Pinot Noir
Appellation: Willamette Valley
Released: February 2009
Retail: \$25.00



VINTAGE

The 2007 vintage in Oregon will be remembered as a challenging one, requiring skill and dedication in the vineyard and winery in order to make great wines. Bud break occurred around April 8, but the vines did not start developing until late April due to cold rainy weather. Bloom took place around June 12, followed by a good set. Veraison did not occur until mid August because of a very cool summer. High temperatures never exceeded the low nineties, and some nights in September were unusually chilly (36°F!). A cool growing season is great for Pinot, since it is a cool climate grape. Unfortunately, the rains came in early, continuing steadily through the harvest with breaks between downpours. We started harvest in Terres Basses on September 27 and picked at 24.5° Brix. We finished harvest after 5.5" of rain on October 26. Most of the vineyards were harvested between 23° and 23.5° Brix. With good sanitary conditions in the vineyard due to very careful viticultural practices, we elected to wait as long as we could before picking to ensure tannin ripeness. We also made extensive use of our state-of-the-art cold storage facility to dry and dehydrate the grapes before processing them. We are extremely pleased with the results. The wines show great concentration, ripe tannins and lower levels of alcohol. Both winemaker Thibaud Mandet and vineyard manager Daniel Fey rose to the challenge and demonstrated that knowledge and skill always pay off.

VINEYARDS

Starting with the 2007 vintage, we have changed the name of this wine from "Willamette Valley" to "Estate Cuvée" to emphasize the fact that all the fruit is Estate grown. It is a selection of different Pinot Noir clones, including #113, #114, and #115, sourced from several different locations. WillaKenzie Estate has a total of 68 acres of Pinot Noir. The vines are planted at 1200 to 1800 vines/acre, running north to south, allowing for maximum sun exposure. All the vineyards are planted on WillaKenzie soil, a type known for its excellent drainage. The plants are grafted onto phylloxera-resistant rootstock and trained into an upright, double guyot trellising system.

Brix: 23.5°

pH: 3.55

TA: 6.0

WINEMAKING

We made the 2007 Pinot Noir Estate Cuvée in our gravity-flow winery with the goal of achieving a rich and elegant style. A cool maceration preceded the open-top, Burgundian-style fermentation that averaged 20 days of skin contact with daily punch downs. Following fermentation, the wine was blended with the press wine in a tank where it settled for several days before being racked to barrels. After aging for a total of 10 months in French oak (20% new) from a variety of coopers, the individual lots were blended to obtain a wine that is fresh and approachable when young. All of the 2007 Estate Cuvée was bottled with screw cap closures.

Alcohol: 13.8%

pH: 3.80

TA: 5.3

TASTING PANEL COMMENTS

The 2007 Estate Cuvée offers attractive aromas of red fruit, with hints of nutmeg and pleasing earthiness. The flavors match the aromas with fresh cherry and cranberry followed by subtle darker notes of blueberry and blackberry. The palate impression is refined yet refreshing with bright acidity and hints of citrus and caramel on the finish. This medium-bodied wine is extremely food-friendly and will pair with a great variety of dishes including roasted poultry, salmon, lighter meats such as pork or veal, and charcuterie. Ready to enjoy now, it will benefit from 1 to 2 years in the cellar and will age well for up to 5 years from its date of release. It can also be served slightly chilled.

For more information visit www.willakenzie.com, e-mail us at tastepinot@willakenzie.com or call 503-662-3280