

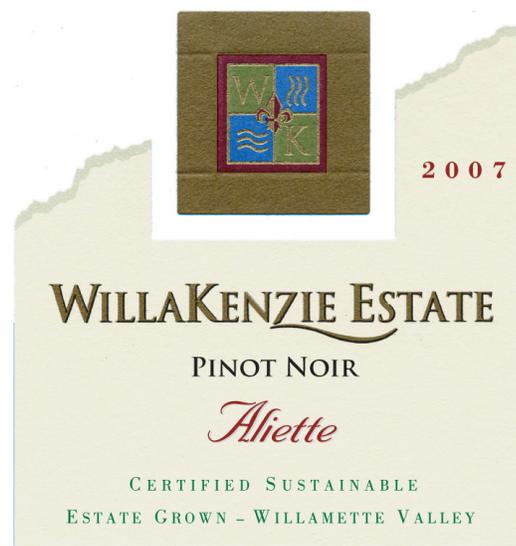
2007 Estate Grown Pinot Noir Alette

Varietal: 100% Pinot Noir

Appellation: Willamette Valley
Yamhill-Carlton District

Released: February 2010

Retail: \$45.00



VINTAGE

2007 was a cool and challenging vintage with bloom around June 12, followed by a good set but a late veraison. The fall rains came early, continuing steadily through the harvest with breaks between downpours. We began 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 waited 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, so the wines show great concentration, ripe tannins and lower levels of alcohol. Both winemaker Thibaud Mandet and vineyard manager Daniel Fey demonstrated that knowledge, skill and patience always pay off.

VINEYARDS

The 2007 Alette is a selection of our Estate grown Pinot Noir Pommard from the Alette vineyard (named after owner Bernard Lacroute's mother) and small amounts of the Dijon clones. Alette, situated on a gentle hill between 560 and 600 feet high, was the first vineyard planted at WillaKenzie Estate, in 1992. The ground has a deep layer of WillaKenzie soil on top of harder to penetrate sandstone. As a result, the vines have spread their roots deeply and rarely need irrigation. The plants are grafted onto phylloxera-resistant rootstock and trained into an upright, double guyot trellising system.

Approximately half the fruit was thinned at veraison to assure low yields and maximize flavor and intensity. The blocks of Pinot Noir were closely monitored as the harvest date approached, and the picking date was chosen based on taste and maturity.

Yield: 2.4 tons/acre

Brix: 23.5°

pH: 3.50

TA: 6.5

WINEMAKING

In our gravity-fed winery, this 2007 Pinot Noir was handcrafted to achieve a fully extracted and complex style. A cool maceration preceded the open-top, Burgundian style fermentation for a total of 25 days of skin contact and daily punchdowns by 'Bigfoot', our pneumatic punchdown device. The wine was then gravity fed directly to barrels where it underwent 100% Malolactic fermentation during the next 7 months. The wine spent a total of 15 months in 50% new French oak from a selection of four coopers. The wine was bottled unfiltered and unfined.

Alcohol: 13.8%

pH: 3.7

TA: 5.6

TASTING PANEL COMMENTS

The aromatics open with a delicate perfume of flowers and potpourri, giving way to bright red fruits, especially of sweet Bing cherries, strawberries and cream, ripe Santa Rosa plums, and then soften with earthy, herbal notes of baking spice and black tea leaves. On the palate, this fruit-forward wine embodies elegance and sultry silkiness with upfront, sweet, round tannins hinting of caramel and spice, that eventually enliven a bright acidity of sweet-tart blood oranges. Beautifully structured, balanced and refined, with a hint of licorice and bay laurel on the long finish, this wine will benefit from two years in the cellar, or decant for the next two years, and it will age for at least 7 to 8 years from its release date. Pair with grilled salmon with mushroom risotto and grilled vegetables. We recommend that you open the wine an hour before serving.