

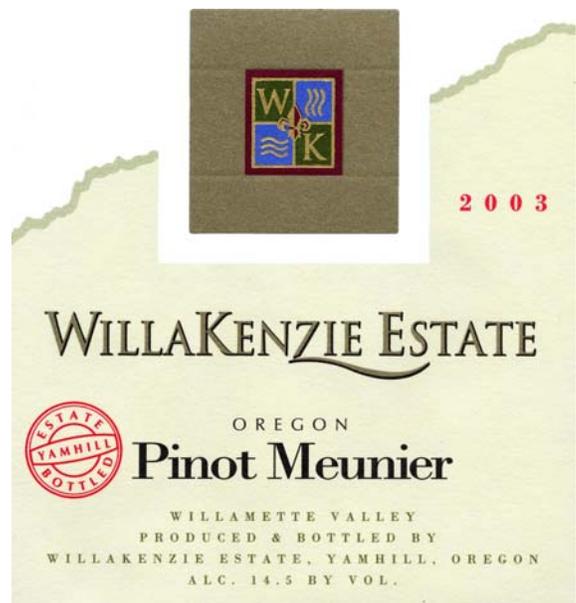
2003 Estate Grown Pinot Meunier

Varietal: 100% Pinot Meunier

Appellation: Willamette Valley
Yamhill County

Production: 370 cases

Retail: \$23.00



VINTAGE

The 2003 growing season was very unusual for Oregon. It started with a mild, very wet spring, but the rains stopped in mid May, and the rest of the growing season was abnormally dry with little or no rain at all until October 7. There was a heat wave in June followed by a warm, dry summer, and then an unusually warm second half of September with temperatures reaching 95° on September 27. Since the vines set a very good crop, we had to drop fruit to achieve our target yields on the same level as the Burgundy Grand Crus. We irrigated the vines several times during the summer and early Fall to keep the vines in top condition. The September heat spike compressed the harvest time from a typical 3 weeks to just 11 days, with all the blocks maturing within a short time window. The sugar levels were quite high, nothing below 24° Brix, but we managed to maintain a high level of acidity with ripe tannins. We started harvest on September 25 and finished on October 5, with grapes showing an incredible level of color and concentration. 2003 will go on record as another great vintage for Oregon.

VINEYARDS

WillaKenzie Estate has four acres of Pinot Meunier, all planted in 1992 on Willakenzie soil, known for its excellent drainage. Pinot Meunier is a native of the Champagne region of France and belongs to the Pinot family. It is named Meunier ('Miller' in English) because of the powdery, flour-like appearance of its foliage. The plants are grafted onto phylloxera-resistant rootstock and trained into an upright, double guyot trellising system. The grapes were picked by hand on the morning of September 30. They were extremely ripe and flavorful and yet maintained a good level of acidity

Yield: 2.4 tons/acre

Brix: 25.1

TA: 6.6

pH: 3.6

WINEMAKING

We used our state of the art, gravity-fed winery to achieve a fully extracted and complex 2003 Pinot Meunier. During this process, no whole clusters were used and the grapes were 100% destemmed. A cool maceration preceded the fermentation for a total of 23 days of skin contact with daily punch downs by 'Bigfoot,' our mechanical punchdown device. After pressing, the wine settled few days in tank and was then moved by gravity directly into barrels where it underwent Malolactic fermentation during the next six months. The wine spent a total of 11 months in French oak barrels (20% new) from a selection of coopers.

Alcohol: 14.5%

TA: 4.8

pH: 3.8

TASTING PANEL COMMENTS

Wonderfully dark garnet in color, the wine displays aromas of black currant, red berries, spice and vanilla, followed by earthy tones. This elegant wine leaves a lasting impression of intense red and black fruit, with a touch of sweetness, balanced acidity and round, soft tannins contributing to a long finish. Approachable now, this Pinot Meunier will benefit from a year or two of cellaring. With its ripe, full berry flavors, earthy nose and soft tannins, it is easy to pair with food, especially with pâté, game birds, wild game and almost anything with exotic mushrooms. Open this wine and leave it at room temperature for at least 2 hours before drinking.