

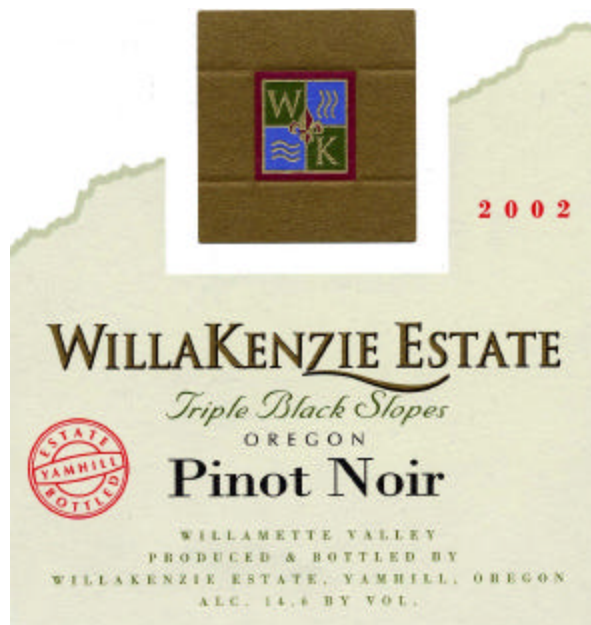
2002 Estate Grown Pinot Noir “Triple Black Slopes”

Varietal: 100% Pinot Noir

Appellation: Willamette Valley
Yamhill County

Production: 453 cases

Retail: \$ 55.00



VINTAGE

The late fall and winter of 2001-2002 were extremely wet with rainfall totaling 25" between the end of October 2001 and the end of February 2002. We experienced a mild spring with average dates for bud break and fruit set. The summer was dry and moderately warm. Sugars developed in the grapes early in the season, but flavors required a longer hang time to evolve. We used a moderate drip irrigation regime during August and September to keep the vines healthy until we felt that we had reached the right balance between sugar, acidity and flavors. All the Estate grapes were harvested under perfect conditions for the fifth year in a row, measuring between 23° and 25° Brix with great flavors, acidity and sugars.

VINEYARDS

The “Triple Black Slopes” vineyard is composed of 4 slopes facing due south. Each slope is separated from the other by canyons where blackberries and quails abound. As the name indicates (it comes from the black diamond ski slopes designation), it is the steepest part of the vineyard and we farm the “slopes” with narrow track tractors and our best tractor drivers. The elevation varies from 500’ to 675’. The vineyard was planted in 1999 to Dijon clones 114 and 777. The rows are oriented north-south with an average density of 1750 plants per acre, and the vines are trained into an upright double guyot trellising system. The combination of the steep terrain, the south-facing orientation and the clonal selection contributes to the intensity of the wine.

Yield: 2.1 tons/acre

Brix: 24.3

TA: 6.2

pH: 3.6

WINEMAKING

In our gravity-fed winery, this 2002 Triple Black Slopes was handcrafted to achieve a fully extracted and complex style. During this process, 5% whole clusters were used to enhance the spiciness of the wine. A cool maceration preceded the open-top, Burgundian style fermentation for a total of 17 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 8 months. The wine spent a total of 12 months in 50% new French oak from a selection of coopers and was bottled unfiltered and unfined.

Alcohol: 14.6 %

pH: 3.9

TA: 3.5

Residual sugar: < .02% (dry)

TASTING PANEL COMMENTS

The surprisingly dark, rich, ruby color of Triple Black Slopes Pinot Noir suggests at first glance that this is a “big” wine. It is as though the extreme quality of the vineyards, with their 45° slopes, expresses itself directly in the glass. Intense aromas of black fruits are complemented by hints of briar and clove. There is an explosion of black currant and black berry fruit on the palate, followed by hints of violet and leather. Fine fruit-acid balance and well integrated tannins provide ample structure to carry such concentration. A touch of vanilla and spice accompany the long finish. This wine will benefit greatly from at least two years of aging and can be cellared for a further five or ten. No matter when you choose to drink this wine, give it ample time to “breathe” and open up by decanting at least 2 hours prior to serving. It will pair beautifully with roasted wild game, grilled Ahi tuna, or vegetable ragout.